Adorable Animal Posters **3 Personality Quizzes**

American Girl™

January/February 2017

DIY room crafts!

Lovable SNOW PEOPLE

I ♥ my Friends

Throw a *pal*-entine's party!

THIS FROSTING WAS TOTALLY DELICIOUS!

Inspiring real-girl stories

ADVERTISEMENT

CELEBRATE HER BIG DAY IN A BIG WAY
AT AN AMERICAN GIRL STORE!

IT'S A SPECIAL DAY, and we're here to make sure it's a dream come true. From celebrating with friends to participating in fun activities, together we'll make it the best birthday ever.

PARTIES INCLUDE:

- Fun goody bags for guests
- Our signature pink-and-white cake with vanilla ice cream
- Festive doll tiaras
- A keepsake for the birthday girl, and more!

Call **877-247-5223** or visit **americangirl.com/stores** to learn more.

Melody rings in the new year and her birthday on January 1! ***HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE?***

Contents

Follow Your Inner Star™
Volume 25, Number 1

Page
28
Let your light shine

2 **The Buzz**
3 **Girls Express**
8 **Fantastic Fabric**
10 **Winter**
12 **According to Aggie**
14 **We ♥ Cooking**
18 **Happy to Help**
20 **Fresh Face**
22 **Snow Cute**
24 **Happy Hearts Day**
28 **Make Room**
32 **Grin & Bear It**
40 **This or That?**
41 **Mini Mag**
43 **Posters**
45 **Help**
48 **Behind the Scenes**
Plus
Sweet Stickers!

American Girl

Editorial Director
JODI GOLDBERG

likes shopping for necklaces

Executive Editor
BARBARA E. STRETCHBERRY

Senior Editor
MARY RICHARDS BEAUMONT

loves pumpkin bread

Lifestyle Editor
ANDREA DEBBINK

Associate Editor
MELISSA SEYMOUR

loves polka dots

Contributing Editor
EMILY OSBORN

Contributing Writer s
AUBRE ANDRUS, KITSON JAZYNKA

enjoys riding her horse in the snow

Manager of Creative
RILEY WILKINSON

loves baking cookies

Art Directors
GRETCHEN BECKER, DAN NORDSKOG,
JESSICA ROGERS, WENDY WALSH

Senior Production Manager
PAULA MOON

Production Artists
LISA BUNESCU, KRISTI TABRIZI

likes quilting

loves freshly fallen snow

Marketing Manager
SARA HERELEY

Senior Circulation Coordinator
HEATHER HEMPEL GOMEZ

Special Thanks to
ALEX BELMONTE, CARYL BOYER,
PATTI KELLEY CRISWELL, SUSAN DOPKINS,
MEAGAN EGGERS, JOE HINRICHS,
JOLENE SCHULZ, MARK SPELTZ, YOUA THAO

Cover Credits:
WARDROBE STYLING:
MARY RICHARDS BEAUMONT
HAIR: DEB AHRENS

American Girl® (ISSN 1062-7812, Canadian Sales Agreement Number 40635507) is published bimonthly by American Girl Publishing, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. Copyright © 2017 American Girl. All rights reserved. **Customer Service:** 800-234-1278. **Subscriber:** Send change of address information six weeks before moving to *American Girl*, PO Box 5533, Harlan IA 51593-1035. Send old address label (recent mailing label is best), new address, and new telephone number, or call 800-234-1278. **Editorial Offices:** *American Girl*, Editorial Department, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. American Girl Publishing cannot accept liability for loss or damage of photographs or other materials. Unsolicited materials will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. **All submissions received by *American Girl* become the sole property of American Girl Publishing and may be used by American Girl Publishing or its parent or affiliated companies without compensation or acknowledgment.** *American Girl*®, Follow Your Inner Star™, Girls Express™, and According to Aggie™ are trademarks owned by American Girl. American Girl trademarks cannot be used without the express written consent of American Girl.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation of *American Girl*, Publication No. 1062-7812. Filing date: 10/01/16 Issue frequency: Bimonthly. No. issues published annually: 6. Annual subscription price: $24.95. Owner: Mattel. Headquarters: 333 Continental Blvd., El Segundo CA 90245. Editor: Barbara Stretchberry. Periodicals postage paid at Madison WI and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *American Girl*, PO Box 5533, Harlan IA 51593-1035.

	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
A. Total number of copies (Net press run)	453,617	408,450
B. Paid circulation		
1. Paid/requested circ. mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541	307,027	289,650
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other non-USPS paid distribution	26,290	19,313
4. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total paid distribution	333,317	308,963
D. Free distribution		
1. Outside-county stated on Form 3541	521	688
2. In-county stated on Form 3541	444	627
3. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
4. Free distribution outside mail	5,934	3,946
E. Total free distribution	6,898	5,261
F. Total distribution	340,215	314,224
G. Copies not distributed	113,403	94,226
H. Total	453,617	408,450
I. Percent paid	97.97%	98.33%

AMERICAN GIRL IS PUBLISHED BY AMERICAN GIRL PUBLISHING
8400 Fairway Place Middleton WI 53562

American Girl®

Printed in the USA on paper containing at least 10% post-consumer waste.
Recycle me or pass me on to a friend.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Did you know that there's a really easy way to tell us what you like (or don't like) in each issue of *American Girl* magazine? Get a parent's permission, and go to americangirl.com/magpanel to sign up to take a quick survey about each issue of AG. We read each comment from every reader, and your opinions will help make this magazine even better. Thanks for your help!

Barbara

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

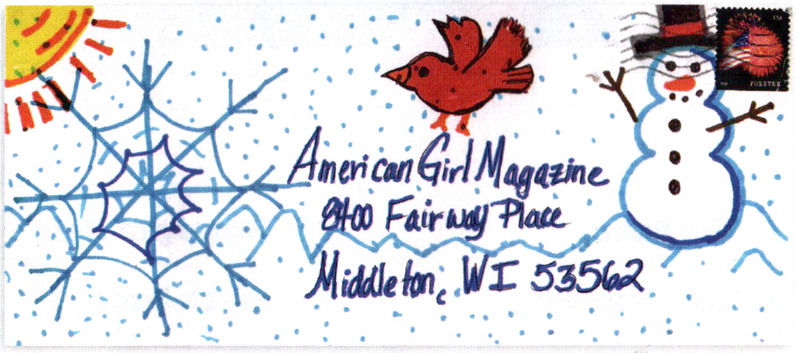
Write to Us!

BE SURE TO INCLUDE
- First and last name
- Address and phone number
- Birth date, including year
- School photo or other portrait
- Parent's signature

SNAIL MAIL

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address and the section of the magazine you're writing to on the back.

OR CONNECT WITH US ONLINE
AMERICANGIRL.COM/PLAY/MAGAZINE



we can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon!

ENVELOPE ART BY
Haven S.
Age 12, New York

Safety first!
Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help. When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Girls EXPRESS

FOR & BY GIRLS!

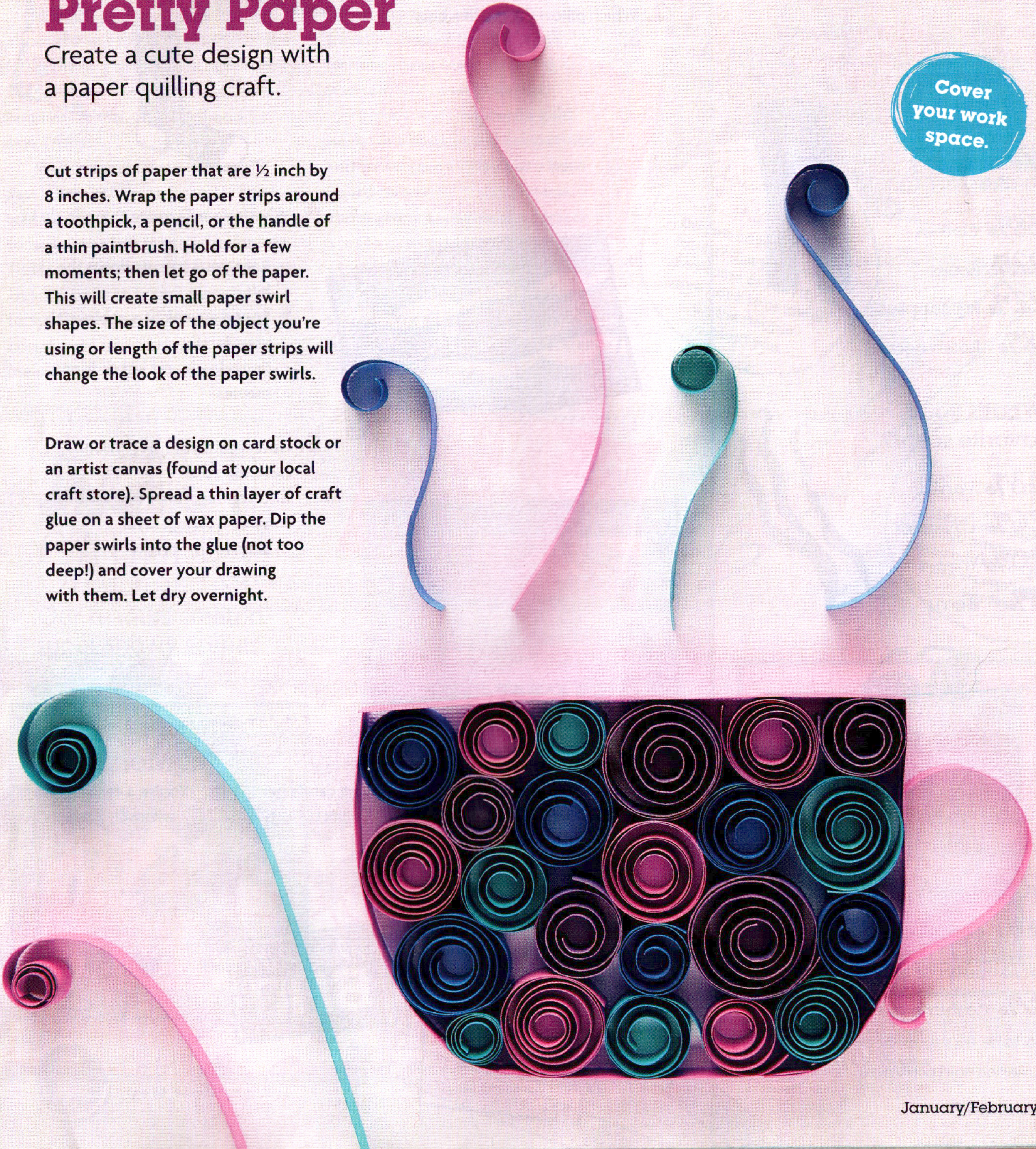
Pretty Paper

Create a cute design with a paper quilling craft.

Cut strips of paper that are ½ inch by 8 inches. Wrap the paper strips around a toothpick, a pencil, or the handle of a thin paintbrush. Hold for a few moments; then let go of the paper. This will create small paper swirl shapes. The size of the object you're using or length of the paper strips will change the look of the paper swirls.

Draw or trace a design on card stock or an artist canvas (found at your local craft store). Spread a thin layer of craft glue on a sheet of wax paper. Dip the paper swirls into the glue (not too deep!) and cover your drawing with them. Let dry overnight.

Cover your work space.



Styling: Melissa Seymour

AG POLL

Answer these questions to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What do you like to shop for most?

38%	Clothes
22%	Books
22%	Art supplies
18%	Room decor

What's your favorite scent?

43%	Vanilla
26%	Lavender
20%	mint
11%	Berry

Which party would you most like to attend?

50%	Beach party
18%	Dance party
17%	Surprise party
15%	Costume party

To take AG's weekly poll, visit americangirl.com/play.

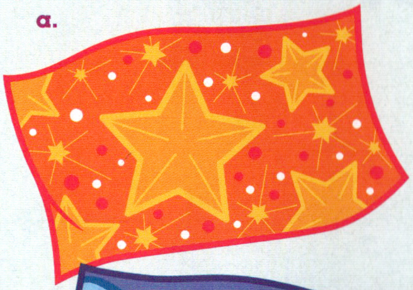
MINI Quiz

Which valentine matches your personality?

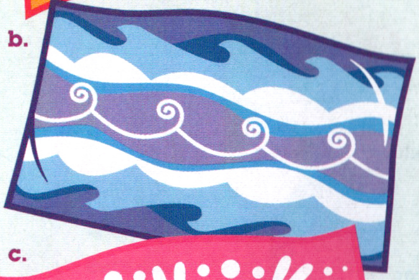
1. At a talent show, you would . . .
- **a.** belt out your favorite song.
- **b.** perform a beautiful ballet routine.
- **c.** do stand-up comedy.

2. Which pillow do you like best?

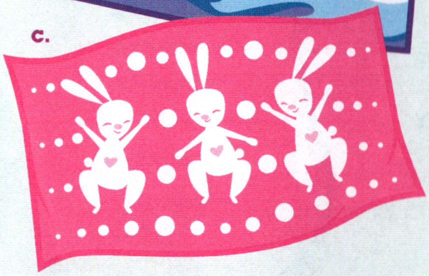
a.



b.

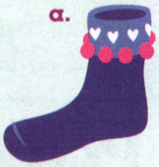


c.

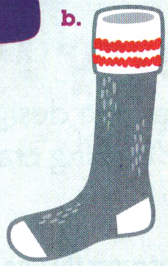


3. Which socks would you choose?

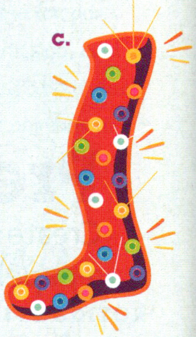
a.



b.



c.



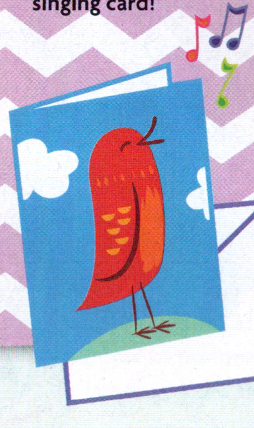
4. What's your favorite thing to do in winter?
- **a.** Race your friends down the ski hill
- **b.** Spend a week at a cabin with your family
- **c.** Snuggle up and watch funny movies

5. How would your best friends describe you?
- **a.** Outgoing, fun, adventurous
- **b.** Sweet, caring, loyal
- **c.** Silly, funny, bright

Answers

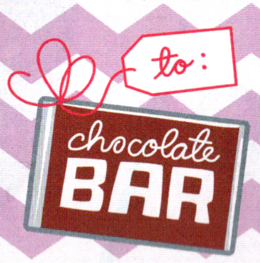
Mostly a's

You're a sweet, singing card!



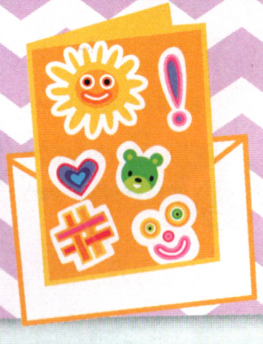
Mostly b's

You're a candy bar with a pretty tag!



Mostly c's

You're a card covered with silly stickers!



SHINING STAR

When 9-year-old Trisha R. heard about the war happening in Syria, she knew she had to help out. "I felt very sad for the children who lost their families, homes, and childhood," says Trisha.

Syria is a country in the Middle East where different groups are at war, forcing people from their homes to look for safety in other countries. Trisha used her artistic talents to create a book that could give hope to Syrian refugees. "I love colors, and I paint from my heart to express my feelings," she says. The book is written and painted by Trisha and is inspired by her dog, Sunshine. The story follows a puppy and its father traveling around the world and learning about hope, believing in yourself, and never giving up.

Trisha's story received a gold medal in a book award competition, and Trisha gave a speech at a book award ceremony. "I was nervous about giving a speech, but I practiced a lot to overcome my fear." Trisha explains that it's important to pursue your passion or dream, even if you're scared. "We all have great power within ourselves to make a difference in the lives of others," she says.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

You can shine, too!

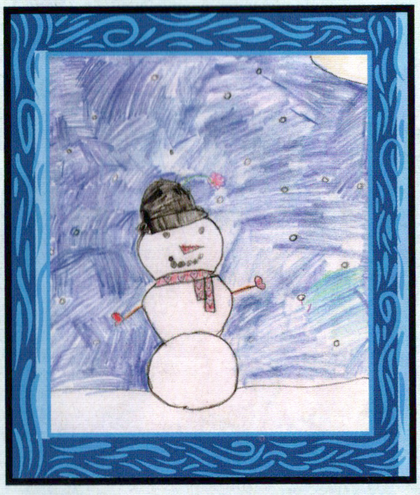
Do you have a special talent? Use your talent and some creativity to give hope to or cheer up the people around you.

AG ART GALLERY

Our readers created super snowy scenes.

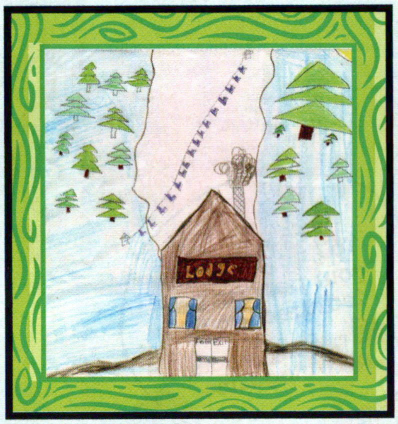
HELP US FILL OUR GALLERY!

Send color copies of original artwork or photos to the address on page 2. Sorry, we can't return entries.



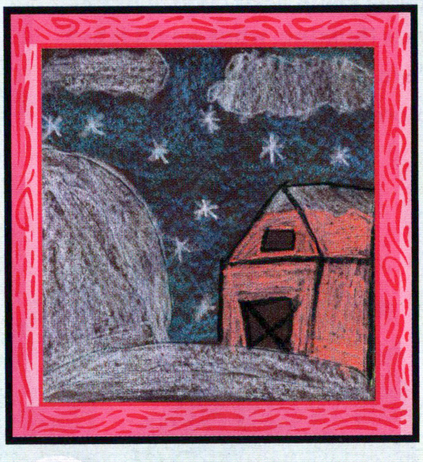
Julia H.

Age 8, Ohio



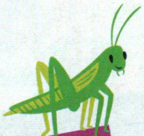
Caitlin M.

Age 10, New Hampshire



Savannah J.

Age 9, Virgina



MEET A PET

Acacia loves her pet salamander, Sally.

Describe the day you got your pet.

I had really wanted a pet. I woke up on my birthday and saw Sally in a cage on my dresser.

Describe a time when your pet made you laugh.

We thought Sally ran away, but she was just hiding in the pot in her cage.

Does your pet know any tricks?

She knows how to catch grasshoppers and eat them fast.

Describe a time when your pet was naughty.

Sally escaped from her cage and we couldn't find her anywhere. She ended up being downstairs.

If you could hear what your pet was thinking, what would it be?

"Grasshoppers, worms, I want more!"

What's your pet's favorite spot in your home?

Sally loves being outside in our backyard where the sunflowers grow in the summer. She doesn't try to run away; she just sits there.

How do you show your pet that you love her?

I play with her every day.

Acacia S.

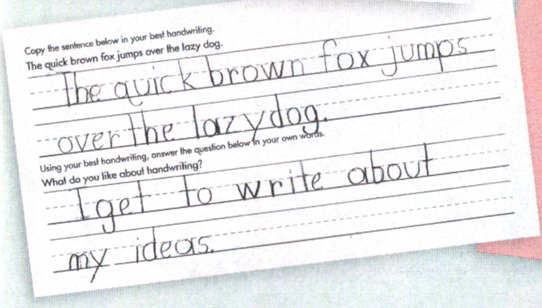
Age 12, Colorado

These are photos of Sally and me!

To find out how your pet can be featured, go to americangirl.com/play/magazine

TRUE STORY

Anaya's principal entered her in a handwriting contest!



Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The quick brown fox jumps
over the lazydog.

Using your best handwriting, answer the question below in your own words.
What do you like about handwriting?

Iget to write about
my ideas.

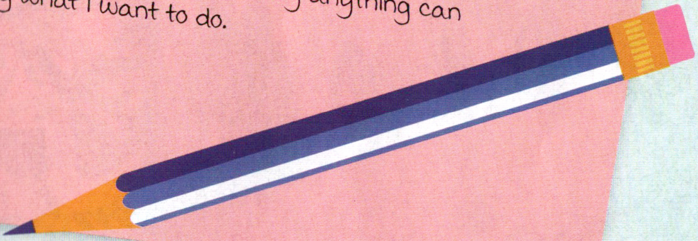
Dear American Girl,

I guess you could say I'm a pretty regular second-grader. But one thing makes me a little different: I was born without hands. You might be surprised that it doesn't hold me back that much. I love to write, especially about my ideas. I love to draw animals, flowers, and trees with colored pencils or markers. I also love to paint and sing, just like other kids.

At school, I work really hard at my handwriting. I hold the pencil between the ends of my wrists. Sometimes I stand at my desk, which makes it a little easier. I'm careful to make neat circles and lines to form letters and words. It's important to always do your best. I practice a lot.

Last spring, my principal entered my work in a handwriting contest. I felt excited and a little nervous. There were about 50 other students competing. When I found out that I won, I still felt excited. But I felt happy, too. Especially because I know hardly anything can keep me from doing what I want to do.

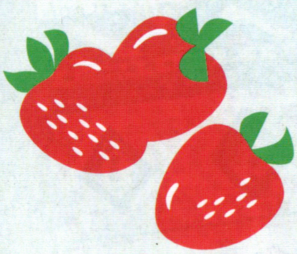
Sincerely,
Anaya E.
Age 8, Virginia

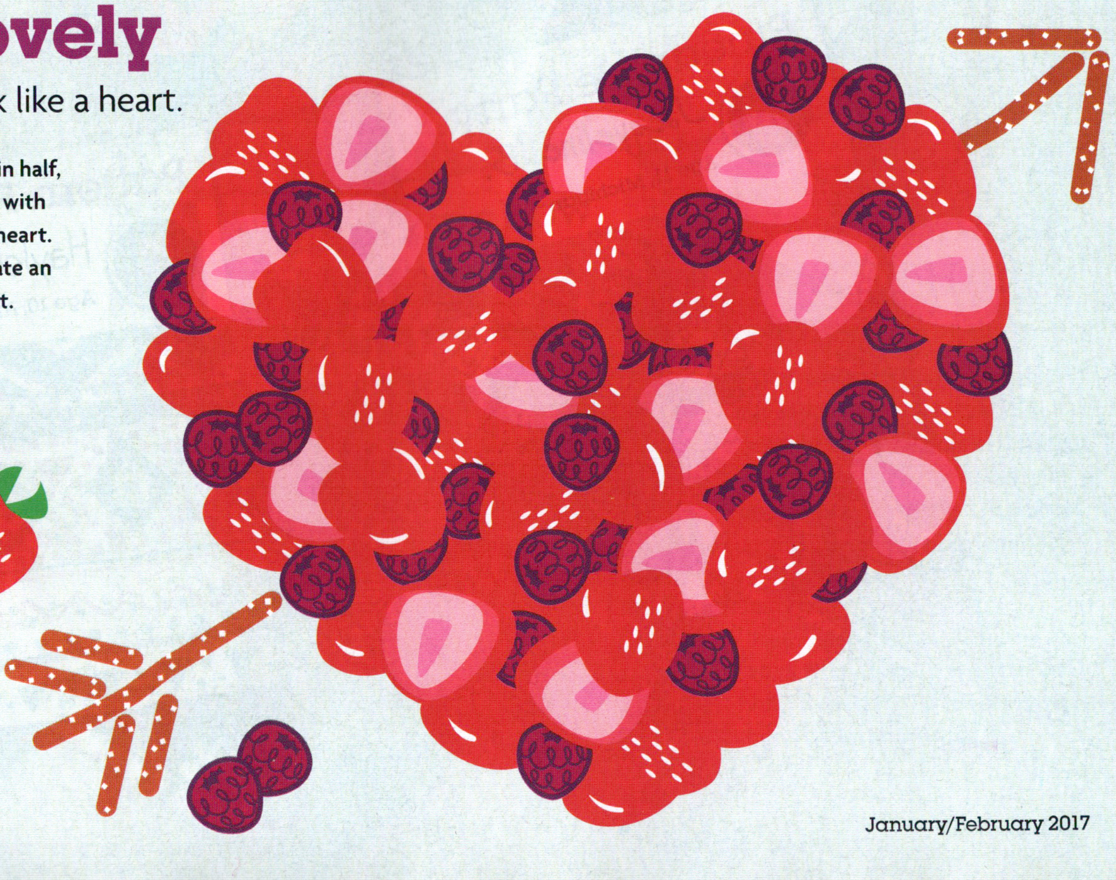


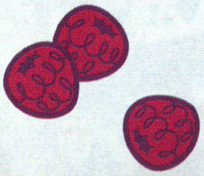
Berry Lovely

Arrange fruit to look like a heart.

Cut lots of strawberries in half, and arrange them (along with other fruit) in the shape of a heart. Use thin pretzel sticks to create an arrow going through the heart.







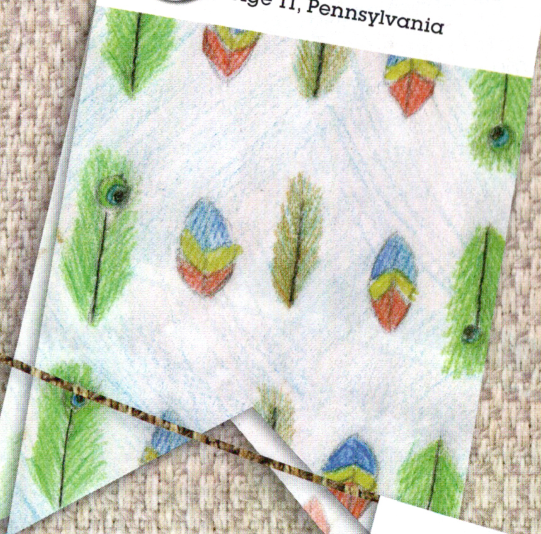
Fantastic Fabric

Our readers created colorful fabric swatches.

Feather Frenzy

Natalie M.

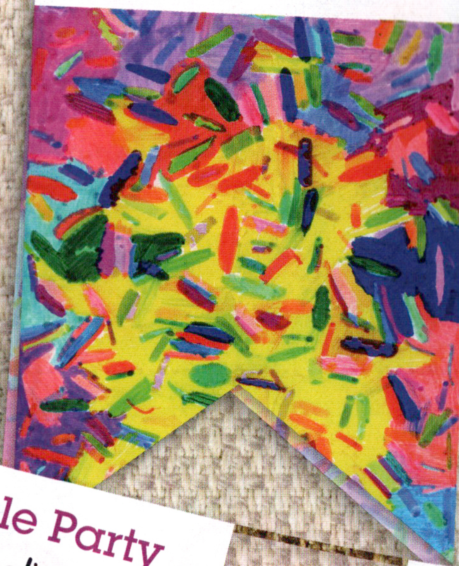
Age 11, Pennsylvania



Sprinkle Surprise

Kate W.

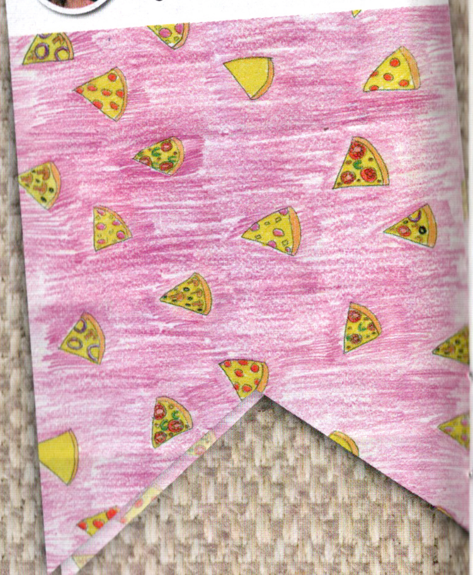
Age 8, Arkansas



Pizza Pizzazz

Marin M.

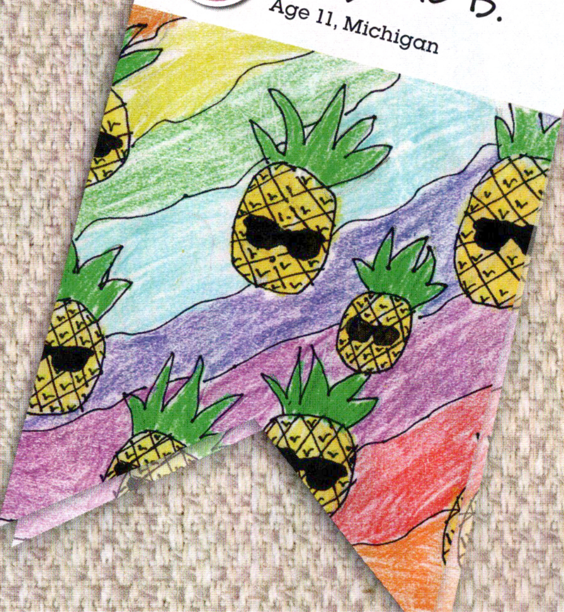
Age 12, Texas



Pineapple Party

Jacqueline B.

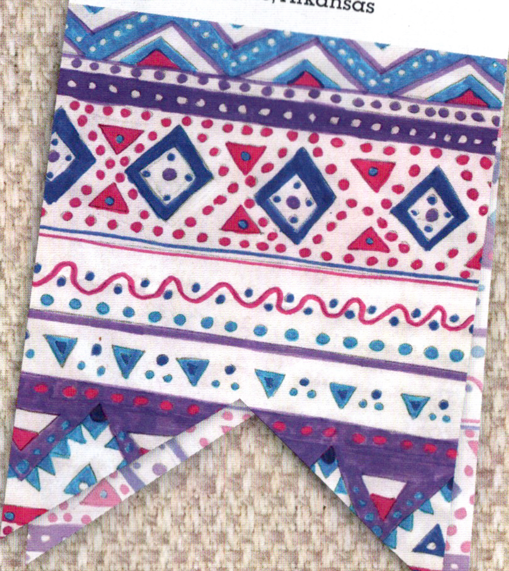
Age 11, Michigan



Pattern Perfect

Haylee F.

Age 10, Arkansas

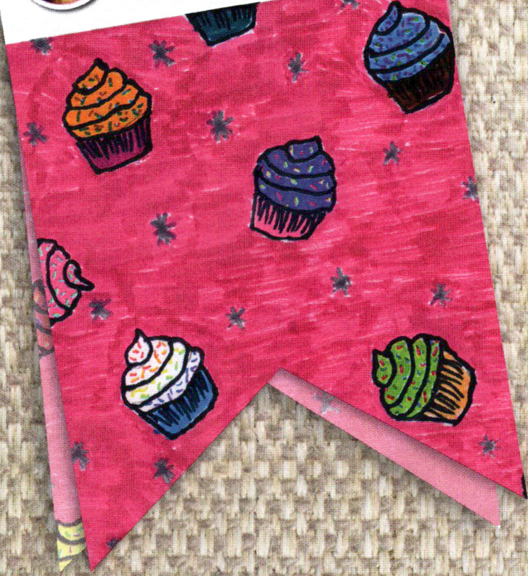


Background: © iStock.com/kertlis

Cupcake Cool

Gabby C.

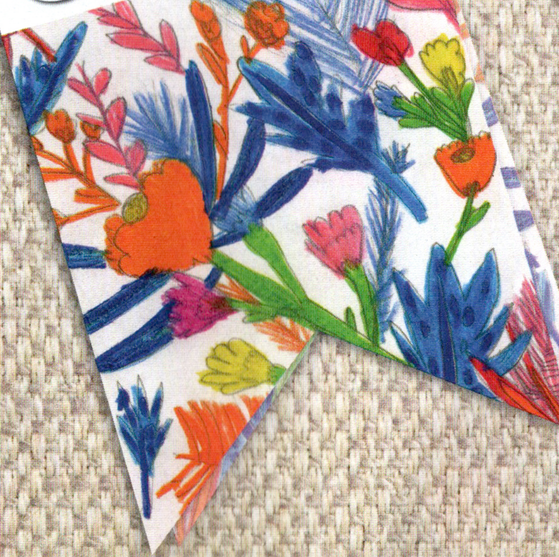
Age 10, Virginia



Tropical Floral

Lilli T.

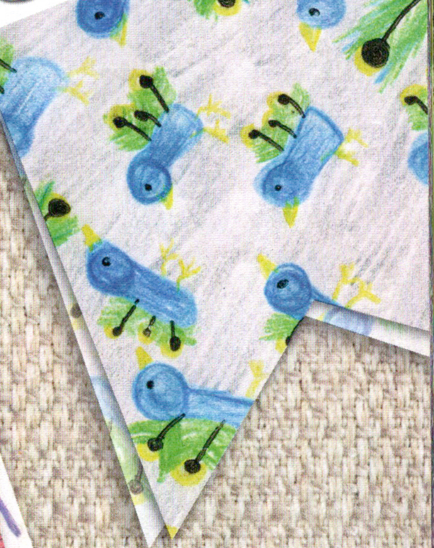
Age 11, Washington



Peacock Pretty

Maddie D.

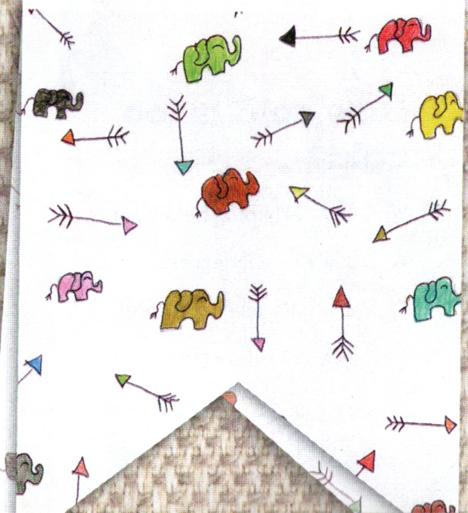
Age 12, New Hampshire



Elephant Love

Georgia M.

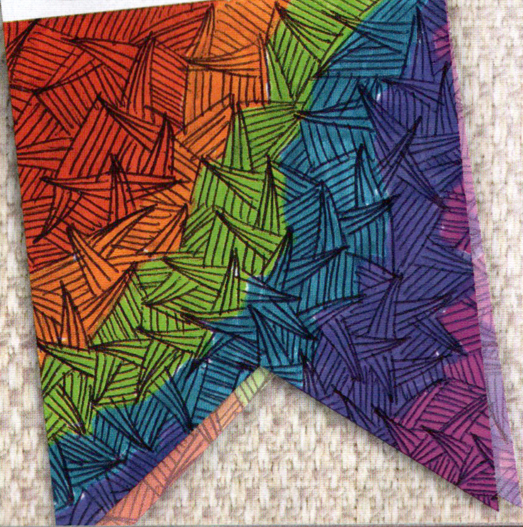
Age 11, Missouri



Rockin' Rainbow

Lucha B.

Age 12, Pennsylvania



New Contest:
WACKY HAIR PHOTOS

Show us your wildest hairstyle! Does your crazy hairstyle stick straight up, or is it lots of different colors? We can't wait to see your most wacky style. Send us a photo of your creative hairstyle to the address on page 2.

Postmark deadline: February 10, 2017. Winners will appear in the July/August 2017 issue. Sorry—we can't return entries. ★

Winter

Our readers answered questions about winter!

Does it snow where you live?

- 64% Yes
- 24% Very rarely
- 12% No

What's your favorite winter activity?

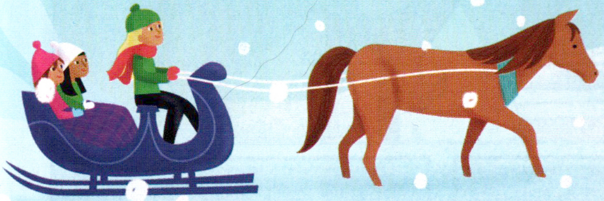
- 42% Sledding
- 22% Skiing or snowboarding
- 17% Ice skating
- 15% Snuggling up in front of a fireplace
- 4% Going to the movies

How cold is too cold?

- 44% Anything below 30!
- 25% 30–40 degrees
- 28% It's never too cold!
- 3% 50–60 degrees

Dogsled OR horse-drawn sleigh?

- ✱ 54% Horse-drawn sleigh
- ✱ 46% Dogsled



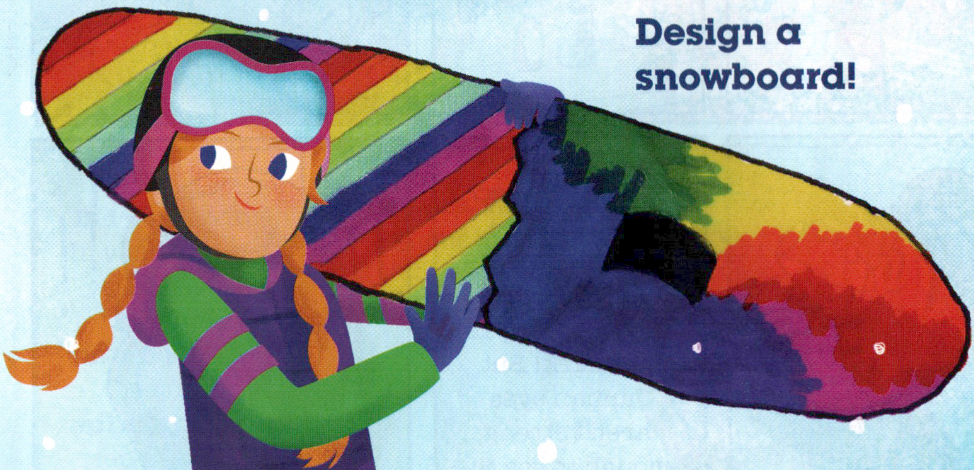
Leg warmers OR arm warmers?

- ✱ 80% Leg warmers
- ✱ 20% Arm warmers

What's your favorite cold-weather accessory?

- ✱ 29% Earmuffs
- ✱ 20% Scarf
- ✱ 20% Mittens or gloves
- ✱ 17% Hat
- ✱ 6% Snowboots
- ✱ 5% Coat
- ✱ 3% Snowpants

Design a snowboard!



Mary S.

Age 11, New York

Illustrations: Paige Pooler

Coming Up: AMUSEMENT PARK

1. Are you tall enough to go on all the rides?
YES or NO

2. Which ride do you like best?
- **a.** Bumper cars
- **b.** Roller coaster
- **c.** Ferris wheel
- **d.** Merry-go-round
- **e.** Water rides

3. Giant swings OR giant slide?

4. Which treat do you like best?
- **a.** Popcorn
- **b.** Slushie
- **c.** Cotton candy
- **d.** Churro
- **e.** Funnel cake

5. Super-fast coaster OR upside-down coaster?

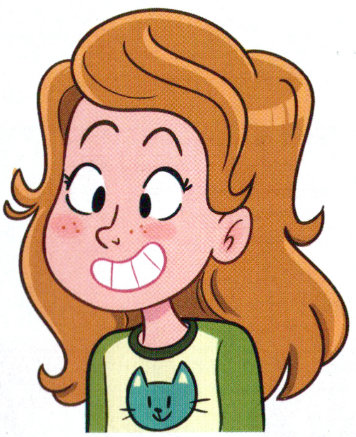
6. What would you name a roller coaster?

Send your answers to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2017. Some answers will appear in the July/August 2017 issue. ★

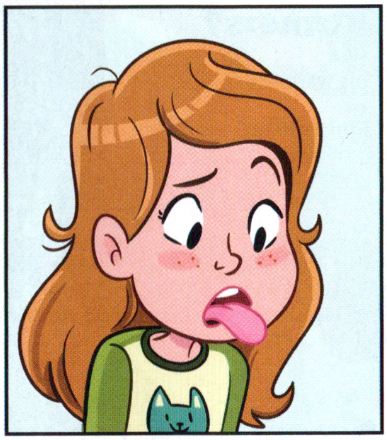
According to Aggie™

Wacky Fact-ys

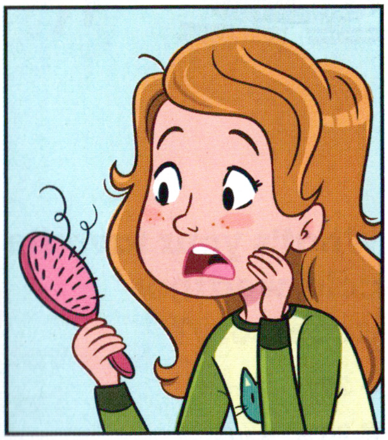
Created by
Mary Richards Beaumont,
Dan Nordskog & Genevieve Kote



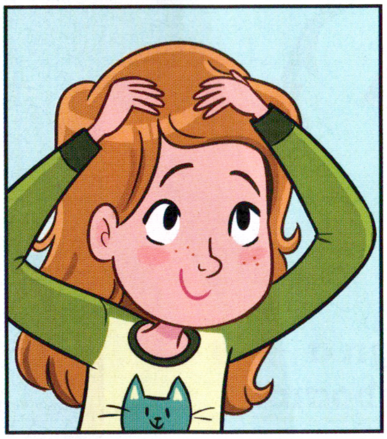
Did you know?
Every person has a unique tongue print.



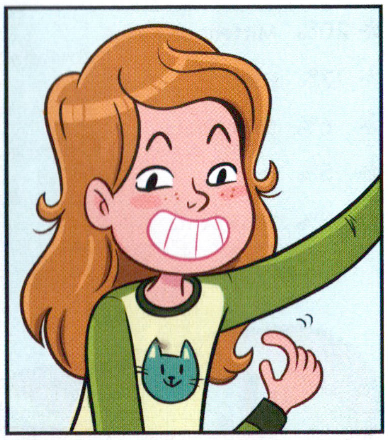
Did you know?
A typical human loses 100 strands of hair each day.



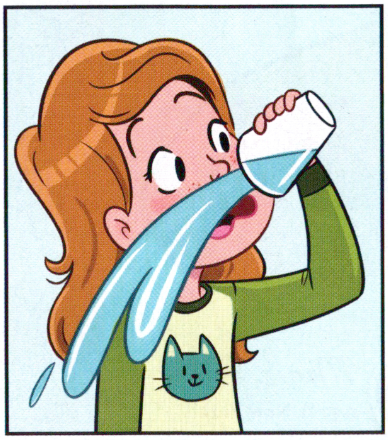
Did you know?
An average human scalp has about 100,000 hair follicles—those grow new hair.



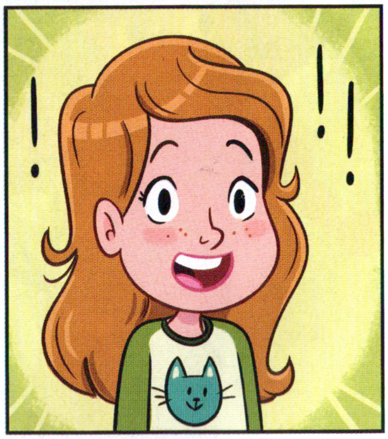
Did you know?
It's impossible for humans to tickle themselves.

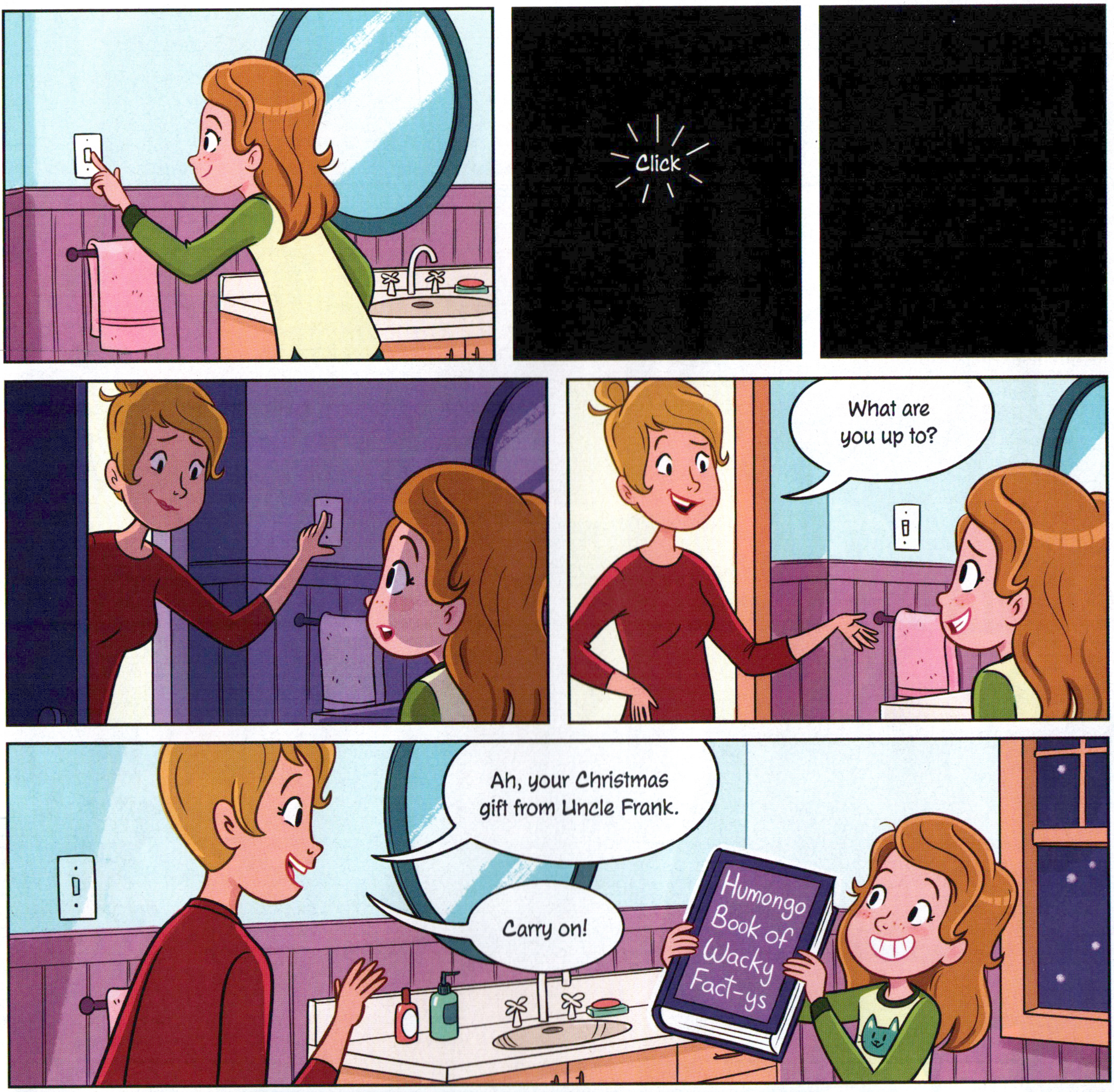


Did you know?
Humans are the only mammals that cannot swallow and breathe at the same time.

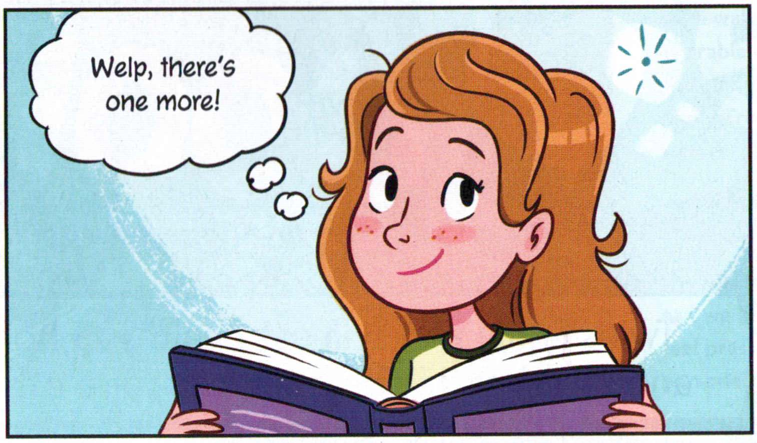


Did you know?
Humans are bioluminescent—meaning they actually glow in the dark! But human eyes aren't strong enough to see the light we emit.



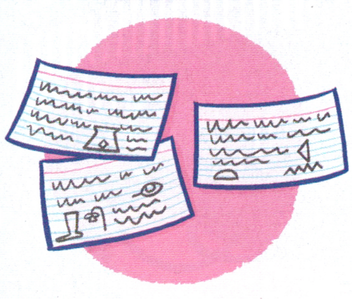

Click
What are you up to?
Ah, your Christmas gift from Uncle Frank.
Carry on!
Humongo Book of Wacky Fact-ys

Did you know? In your lifetime, your memory can hold one quadrillion (that's one **million** billion!) separate bits of information.


Welp, there's one more!

Don't miss my next misadventure:

WHO'S NEXT?



We ♥ cooking

Twins Emily and Lyla eat healthy at home and use their recipe blog to inspire others.

Photos: Danny Christensen

The phrase "two peas in a pod" is the perfect way to describe twin sisters, but for us it makes even more sense. We're twins who cook healthy recipes!

Our parents have always eaten a lot of fresh vegetables and cooked at home, so we were basically raised in the kitchen. There's a video of us when we were three years old, cooking together. It's so cute! By the time we were nine, we were blogging about our healthy whole-food adventures. Now we're 13, we've been on TV, and we even have our own line of make-your-own kale chips that's sold in grocery stores.

> We love creating recipes and posting them on our blog.

We love creating recipes, taking pictures, and then posting them on our blog. The recipes are vegetarian and gluten-free. We eat gluten-free most of the time because it makes us feel better, and we eat vegetarian.

A lot of people at school ask us, "Hey, why are you vegetarian?" In first grade, we were walking on a farm and we saw this adorable cow with the longest eyelashes and camel-colored hair. Her name was Molly. From that day on, we decided we weren't going to eat meat anymore.

Our closest friends know that we're vegetarian, so they have stuff for us to snack on when we go to their houses. If anyone offers us something that we can't eat, we just say "No, thank you." We don't feel pressured to eat it. After all, it's our personal food choice.

Dietary Definitions

vegetarian: a person who doesn't eat meat

pescatarian: someone who doesn't eat most meat but will eat fish

vegan (say it like this: VEE-gun): a person who won't eat any products that come from animals, including milk, eggs, butter, and honey.

gluten-free: a diet that avoids *gluten,* which is found in wheat and other grains

We've gotten used to bringing our own meals wherever we go. We bring lunch to school every day. We never have sandwiches—to us, sandwiches are boring! We experiment with different things such as rice with a sauce or sushi or leftovers.

A lot of our friends have started to bring their lunches to school, too. We like inspiring our friends to eat a little healthier. We'll host cooking competitions with our friends where we challenge everyone to get creative. We give them three random ingredients, and then they have to make something delicious!

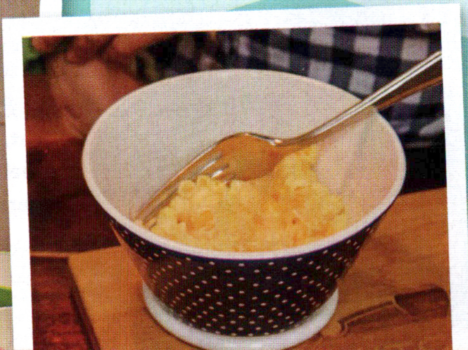
Being vegetarian is fun because it means we get to experiment with food every day. And we can still eat a lot of delicious snacks. Some of our favorites are peanut butter, pretzels and hummus, popcorn, trail mixes, kale chips, and loaded nachos.

We went vegan for a week just to see what it was like. It's hard! We tried making our own vegan cheese, and it didn't work out. We always have flops in the kitchen. It's easy to mess up, like using salt instead of sugar. But one of the best things you can do in the kitchen is make mistakes. That's how you learn!

We like to do cookie bake-offs for the holidays, so one time we made delicious thin mint cookies. Emily dipped them in chocolate—and then dropped them on the floor. We learned that you should always be careful in the kitchen and take your time.

When we're trying to create a recipe, we'll usually start with an ingredient we love, such as coconut milk, avocado, or pickles. Then we'll try to make two recipes. We'll write everything down as we go. If we disagree about something, we'll flip a coin or have a family vote.

> one of the best things to do in the kitchen is make mistakes.



YOU WILL NEED

☐ 12-ounce box gluten-free macaroni

☐ 2 cups milk

☐ 1 ½ tablespoons butter

☐ 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar

☐ 1 cup shredded mozzarella

☐ ½ cup shredded Parmesan

☐ 1 teaspoon salt

☐ ½ cup ricotta

Lyla's gluten-free cheesy homemade mac & cheese

When we have a do-it-yourself dinner, sometimes I offer to make mac & cheese for Emily and myself. It's a delicious meal, and I would love to share it with you.

Ask a parent to help you with this recipe. Cook the macaroni. When it's done, drain the noodles and place them back in the pot to keep warm. Put the milk and butter into a medium saucepan over low heat. When the butter is melted, stir in the cheddar, mozzarella, Parmesan, and salt. When all are melted, stir in the ricotta. Pour in the macaroni, and stir until coated.

For a different texture, ask a parent to place the mac & cheese into a buttered baking dish and bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Enjoy!

Working as sisters is a lot of fun, but sometimes we'd like more space in the kitchen. We try to be fair. If one person writes a recipe, then the other person edits the recipe and takes photos. Then we'll swap jobs next time. We have fun coming up with creative blog post titles together.

Sometimes everything doesn't work out perfectly—and that's OK! For example, it's really hard to photograph food. But the best part about working together is that we can constructively criticize each other's work and help each other improve. So if we're not happy with a photo, we might try different angles and different lighting.

It's always good to experiment and try new things—in life and with food! When you eat healthy, it makes you feel better, and it can be twice as delicious. ★

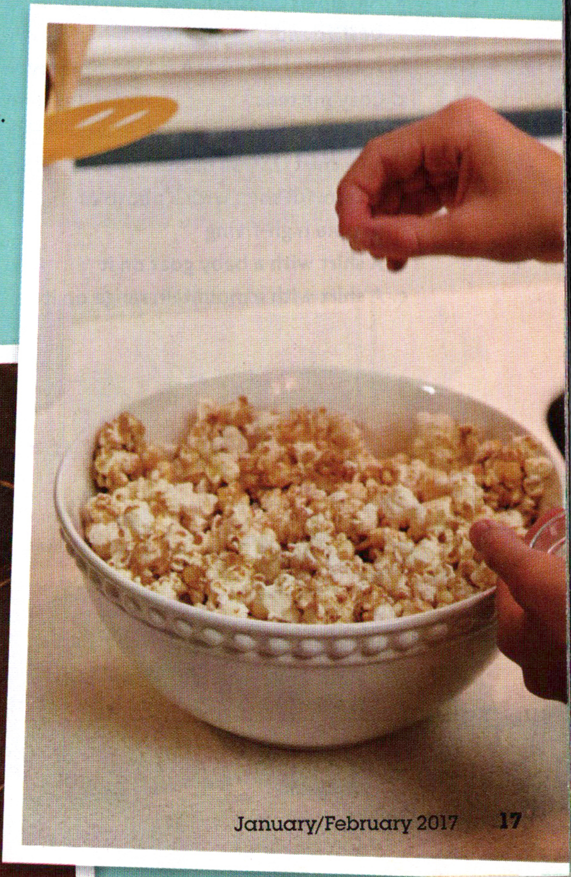
Peanut Butter & honey Popcorn

This popcorn is our favorite—salty and sweet. It tastes great and is also quite filling. Your taste buds will be super happy, and so will your belly.

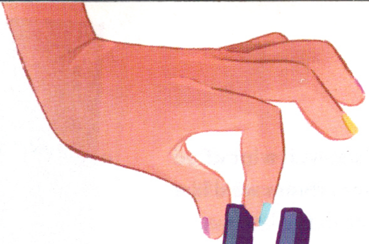
YOU WILL NEED

- ☐ ⅓ cup popcorn kernels
- ☐ ⅔ cup peanut butter
- ☐ ¼ cup + 1 tablespoon honey

Ask a parent to help you with this recipe. Pop the popcorn. Put the popped popcorn into a large pot on the stove, and then add the peanut butter and honey. Turn the heat on low, and gently stir the mixture until everything is melted and the popcorn is coated. Let cool, and then eat with a spoon.



Quiz



Happy to Help

How can you make a difference?

1. Which camp sounds the most fun to you?
- **a.** Art camp—you love coming home with cute crafts to give as presents.
- **b.** Horse camp—you love brushing the foals and going on trail rides.
- **c.** Adventure camp—you love sleeping under the stars after a long hike.

2. Which present would you love to receive?
- **a.** A framed photo of you and your best friend
- **b.** A colorful new leash for your puppy
- **c.** Cozy mittens

3. Which shirt do you like best?
- **a.** A colorful shirt with a photo of people high-fiving
- **b.** A shirt with a baby goat on it
- **c.** A shirt with a mountain range on it

4. What do you and your friends like to do on the weekends?
- **a.** Listen to music and talk
- **b.** Hang out and watch TV
- **c.** Go sledding or make snowpeople

5. Which show do you always stop at when you're flipping through channels?
- **a.** A funny show about a group of friends
- **b.** A show about cute baby animals
- **c.** A show that takes place in an interesting part of the world

6. How would you surprise a friend on her birthday?
- **a.** Write her a heartfelt card
- **b.** Give her some really funny stickers
- **c.** Bring her a flower in a little pot

7. The best type of vacation is one filled with . . .
- **a.** sweet moments with your family.
- **b.** relaxation.
- **c.** lots of adventure.

8. What's your dream bedspread?
- **a.** A bedspread pattern with hearts
- **b.** A bedspread pattern of bugs
- **c.** A bedspread with a sunset

9. What do you find most interesting during winter?
- **a.** Noticing how your neighbors pitch in to help one another shovel snow
- **b.** Finding animal prints in your backyard
- **c.** Watching a lake freeze over throughout the season

10. After school you're usually . . .
- **a.** making a snack for you and your sister.
- **b.** cuddling with your cat.
- **c.** playing outside with a friend.

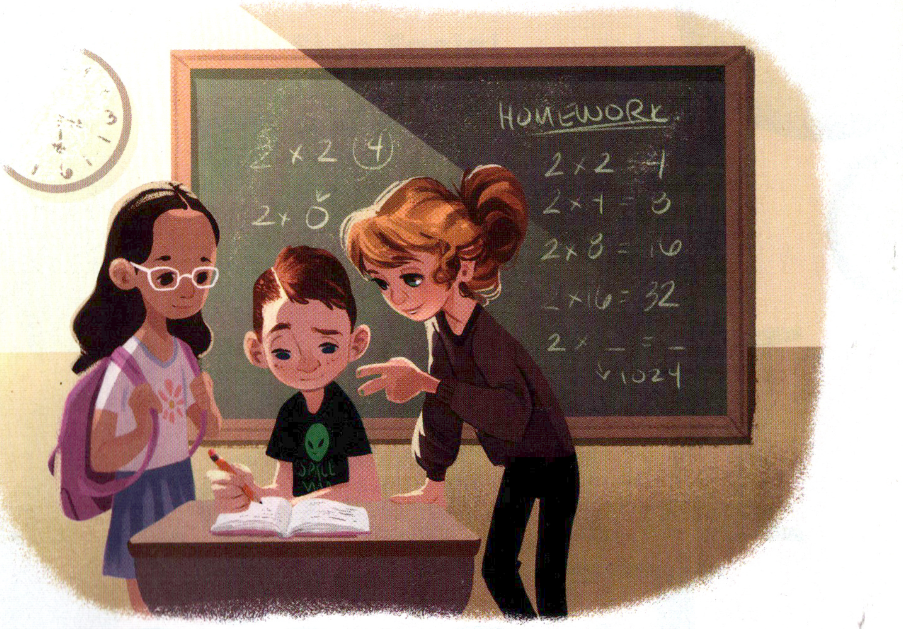
Ask for a parent's permission before volunteering or collecting items.

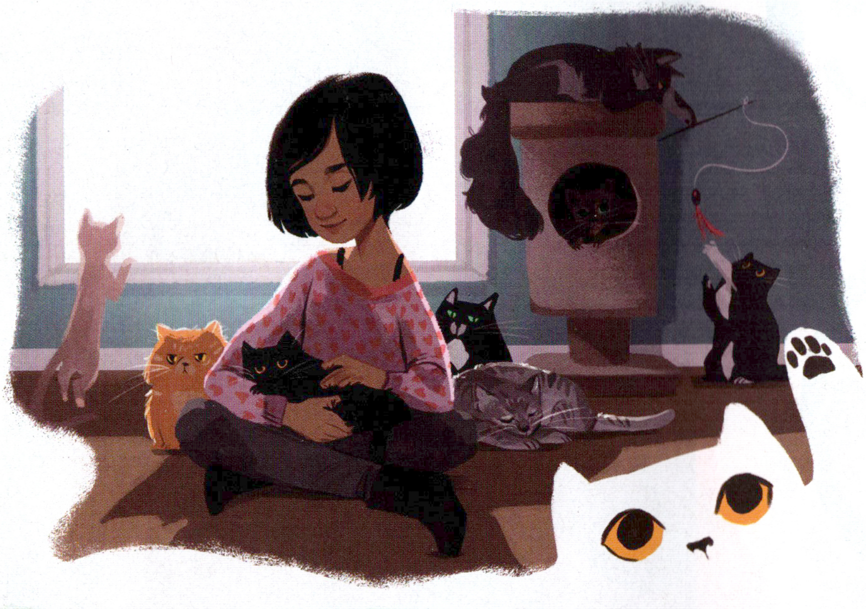
Mostly a's

You're a people person! You're very considerate of others, and you are really good at connecting with the people around you. Your creativity brightens the world.

Ways you can help

- ✱ Make cheerful cards for people in a hospital.
- ✱ Collect food for your local food pantry.
- ✱ Visit a nursing home in your community.
- ✱ Tutor kids at your school.
- ✱ Bake cookies and deliver them to your local fire department.





Mostly b's

Animals are your passion. You are very understanding and have a laid-back personality. You have lots of patience, and that makes you a great critter caretaker.

Ways you can help

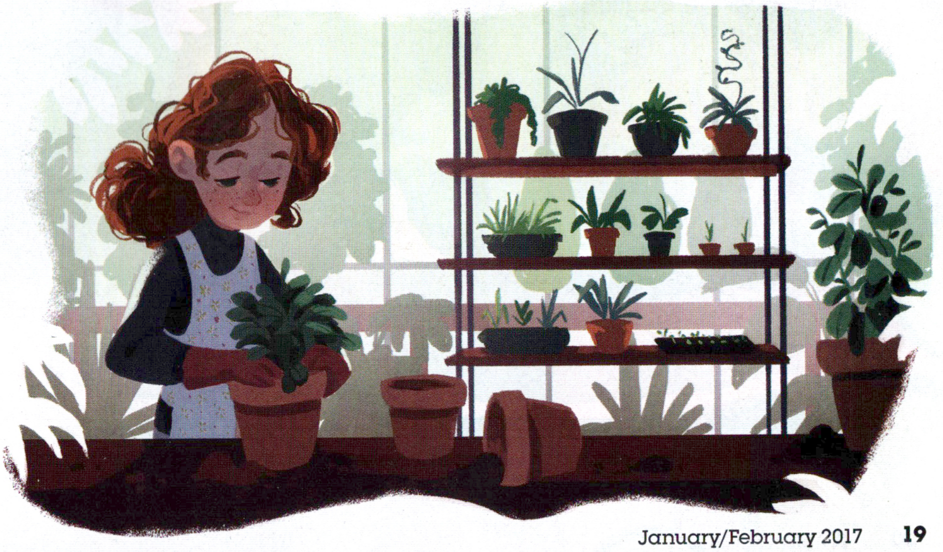
- ✱ Educate people on different types of endangered species.
- ✱ Volunteer at your local animal shelter.
- ✱ Collect materials needed at your local animal shelter.
- ✱ Offer to walk the dogs of family members or friends who could use the help.

Mostly c's

You love spending time in nature, so you'd be great at helping take care of the earth. You're adventurous and happy to be outdoors in any weather.

Ways you can help

- ✱ Be the person in charge of recycling at home.
- ✱ Form a Green Team to find ways for your school to be more earth-friendly.
- ✱ Plant a tree or garden.
- ✱ Do your best to not be wasteful when it comes to food, water, clothing, and other things. ★



Illustrations: Alexandria Neonakis

Fresh Face

Show your skin some love with a spa-style treatment.

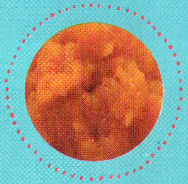
Text: Carrie Anton Photos: Chris Hynes Styling: Emily Osborn, Lynée Ruiz

Mix up one of these magical masks and then follow the tips for a super four-step facial. Note: Check with a parent and test the mask on your inner forearm before applying to your face.

Mix-Up Masks

Mediterranean
For soft, smooth skin, combine ⅓ cup olive oil with one small mashed avocado.

Pretty Parfait
If your skin's been a bit rough lately, mix together ⅓ cup plain oatmeal, ⅓ cup warm water, 1 teaspoon honey, and 2 tablespoons plain yogurt.



Jack-o'-Lantern
For healthier, more radiant skin, mix together ¼ cup canned plain pumpkin purée and 1 tablespoon honey.

Fall Favorite
To soothe your skin, combine ¼ cup natural applesauce with 2 tablespoons wheat germ.

More ideas for relaxing and pampering yourself can be found in the book *Spa-mazing.*

Four-Step Facial

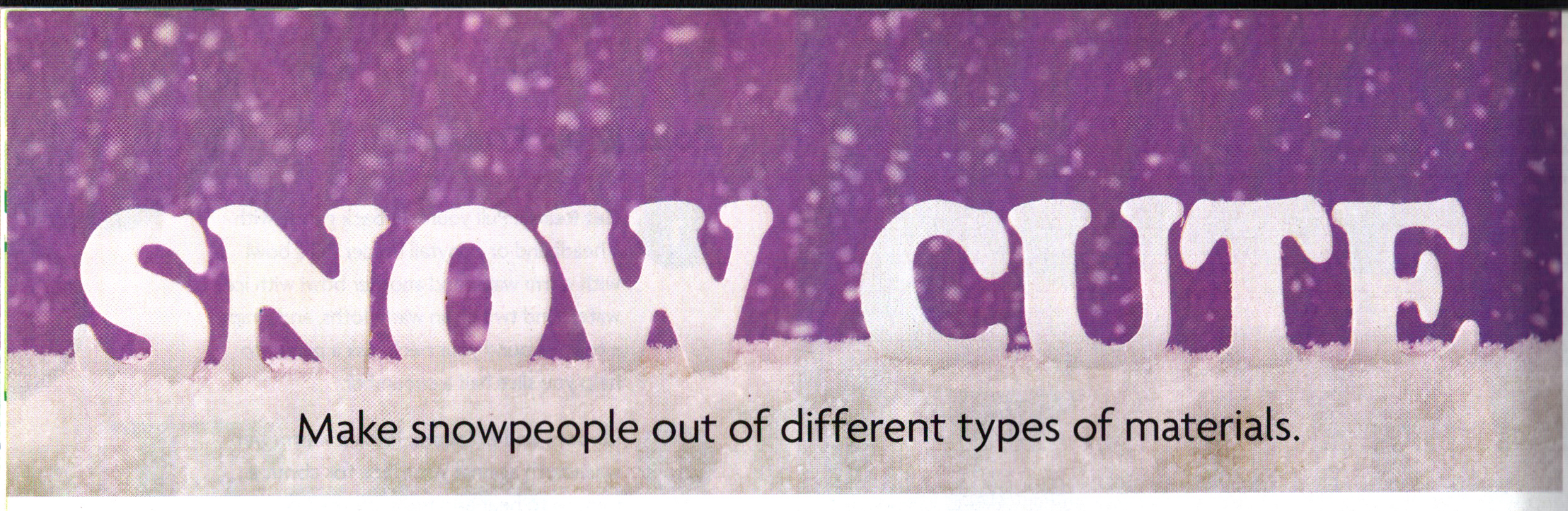
1. **Get Ready:** Pull your hair back gently with a headband or ponytail holder. Fill a bowl with warm water and another bowl with ice water. Find two clean washcloths, and wrap a towel around your neck. Ask a parent to help you slice half a cucumber.

2. **Cleanse and Exfoliate:** Press a warm, wet washcloth against your face for about a minute to heat and moisten your skin. Then apply a gentle cleanser or scrub, rubbing your fingertips in small circles to cleanse your skin. Rinse.

3. **Relax and Refresh:** Apply to your face one of the masks you mixed up, and set a timer for 10 minutes. Dip a washcloth into the ice water, wring it out, and fold the washcloth in a strip. Lie back and place a cucumber slice over each closed eye. Then lay the cool washcloth over the top of the cucumber slices.

4. **Massage and Moisturize:** When time is up or the mask is dry, rinse it off. Pat your face dry and apply a small amount of moisturizing face lotion. Make small circles with your fingertips to massage your facial muscles. ★

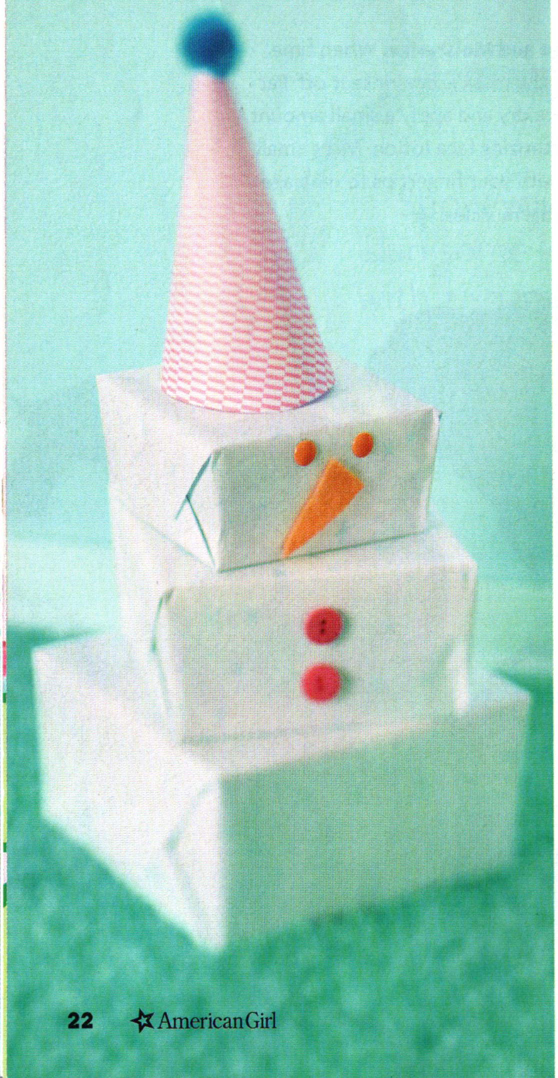
SNOW CUTE



Make snowpeople out of different types of materials.

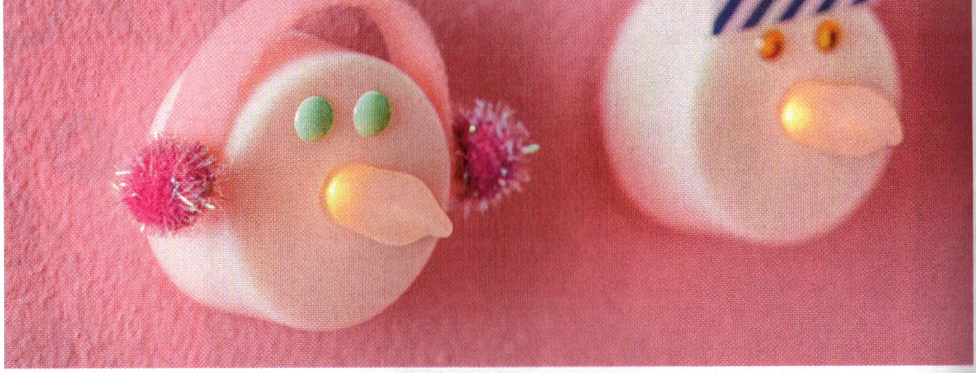
Box It Up!

Wrap three empty boxes of different sizes in parchment paper and stack them from largest to smallest. Add adhesive gems for eyes, and cut a piece of orange felt for the nose. Glue the felt nose and gem eyes to the top box. Create a hat with rolled-up paper and a pom-pom ball, and glue buttons to the middle box.



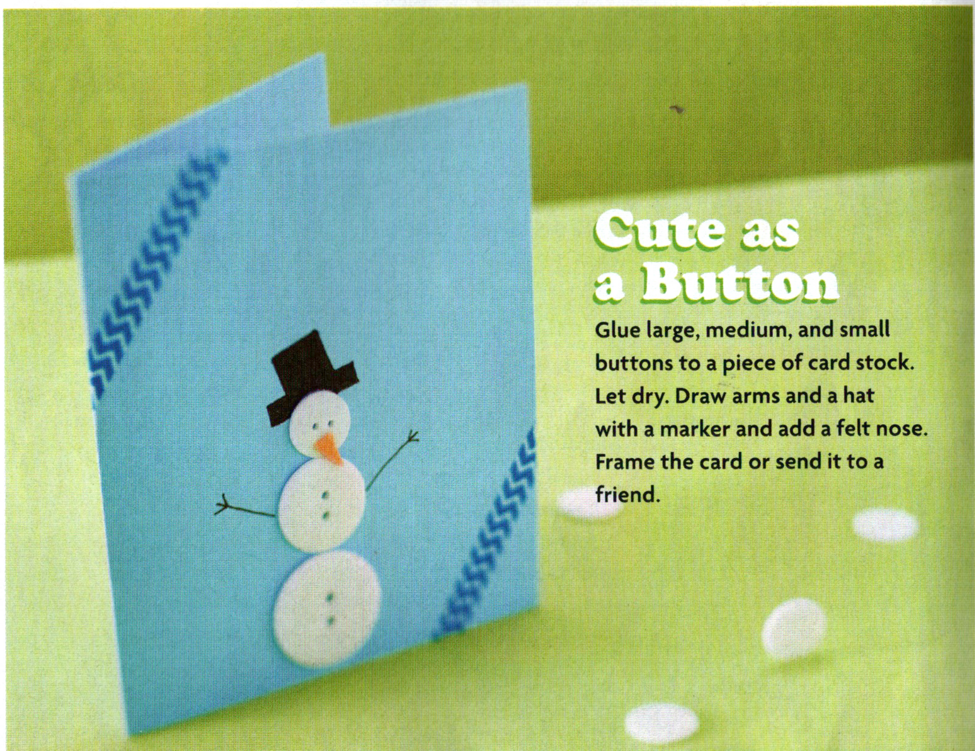
Tea-riffic

Make a battery-operated LED tea light look like a snowperson face. Use adhesive gems for the eyes. Use felt and pom-pom balls to create earmuffs, or create a hat out of paper. Attach them with adhesive dots.



Cute as a Button

Glue large, medium, and small buttons to a piece of card stock. Let dry. Draw arms and a hat with a marker and add a felt nose. Frame the card or send it to a friend.



Snow Sock

Fill a large white sock with rice, and tie off the top. Tie a piece of thin ribbon around the middle-top of the sock to create a head and a body, and leave the ends of the ribbon long for a scarf. Use a baby sock to cover the knot on the top of the snowperson's head. Add adhesive gems for the eyes, and use craft glue to attach a piece of orange felt for the nose. Add a few buttons to the snowperson's "stomach" using craft glue.

Pretty Pots

Paint small, medium, and large flower pots with white craft paint. Let dry. Stack the pots largest to smallest, and decorate with adhesive gems. Use a baby sock as a hat. Tie a strip of fabric around the top pot to create a scarf.

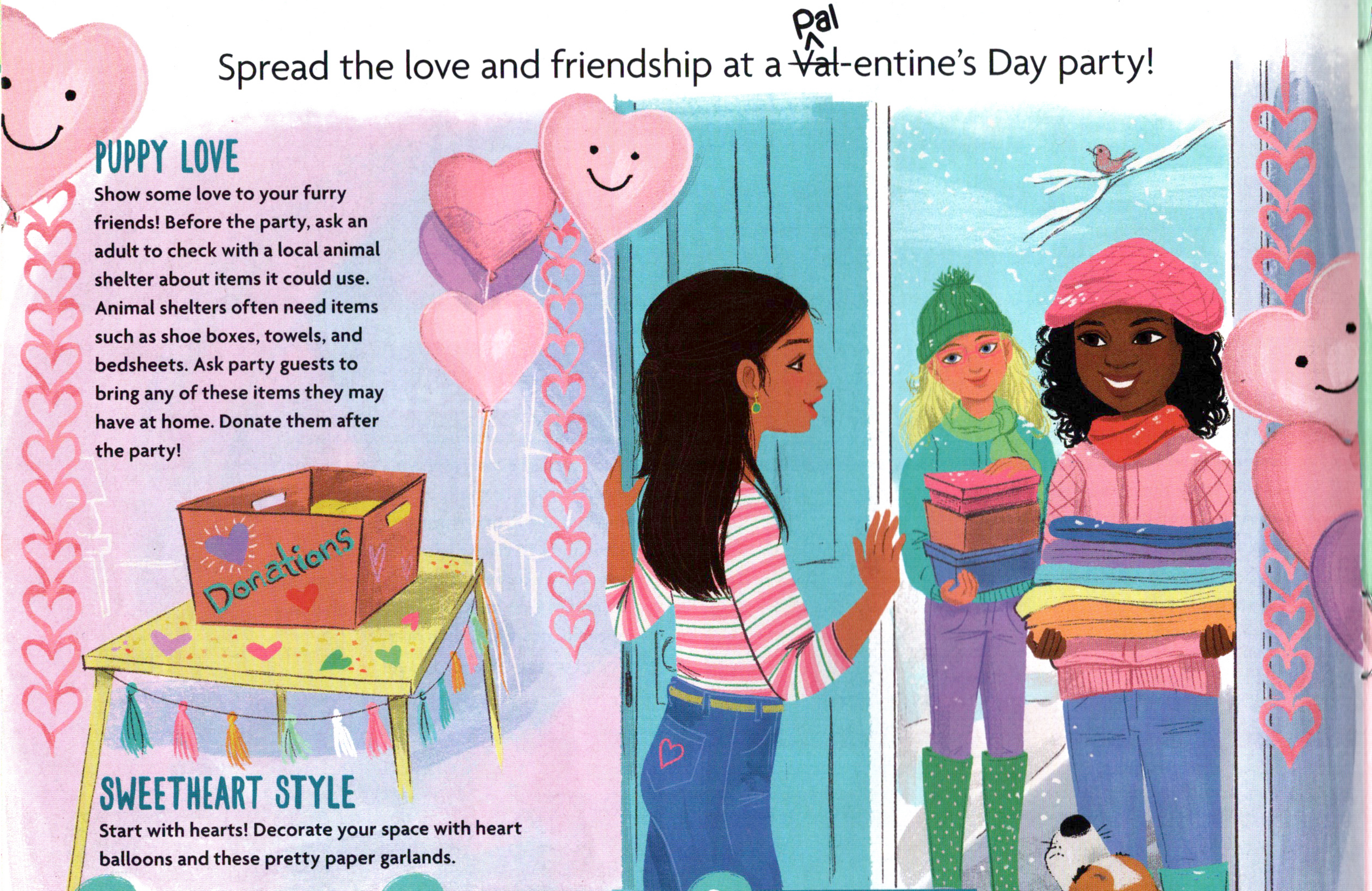
Sweet Snow

Add frosting to the top of a marshmallow, and stack a second marshmallow on top. Add frosting to the top of the second marshmallow, and stack a cookie and chocolate to create a hat. Add pretzel arms and licorice for a scarf. Use frosting to create eyes and buttons. Add an orange sprinkle nose, and then display for all of your friends to see! ★

Styling: Melissa Seymour

HAPPY HEARTS DAY

Spread the love and friendship at a ~~Val~~ Pal-entine's Day party!



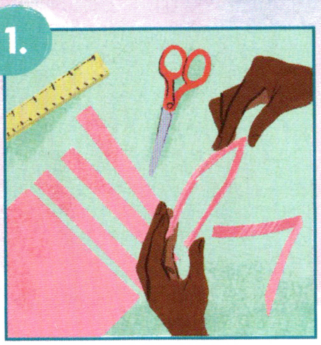
PUPPY LOVE

Show some love to your furry friends! Before the party, ask an adult to check with a local animal shelter about items it could use. Animal shelters often need items such as shoe boxes, towels, and bedsheets. Ask party guests to bring any of these items they may have at home. Donate them after the party!

SWEETHEART STYLE

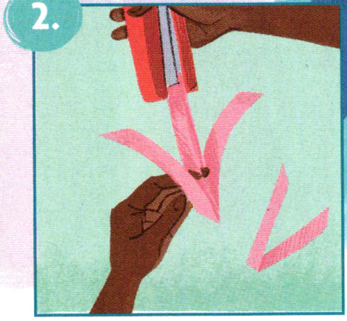
Start with hearts! Decorate your space with heart balloons and these pretty paper garlands.

1.



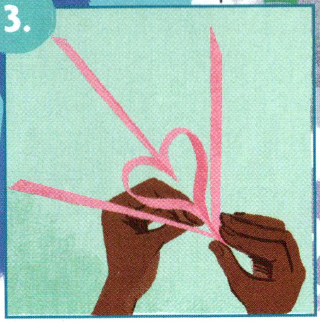
Start with a few sheets of colored paper that are 8½ by 11 inches. Cut many paper strips that are 1 inch wide and 8½ inches long. Fold each strip in half.

2.



Layer two folded paper strips. Staple them together at the fold. Then staple together the ends of the inner paper strip.

3.



Bend the ends of the outer paper strip to form a heart shape. Holding the ends together, add another folded paper strip and staple as shown. Repeat step 3 until the garland is as long as you'd like.

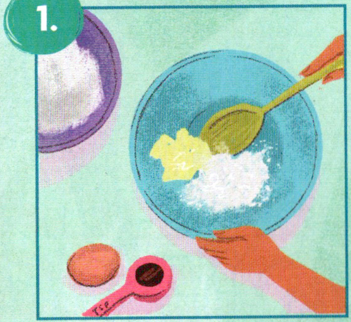
CUTIE-PIE COOKIES

Make these treats together, and then use them to brighten someone's day. Ask a parent to help you find people in your community who might appreciate them: neighbors, mail carriers, police officers, or librarians.

YOU WILL NEED

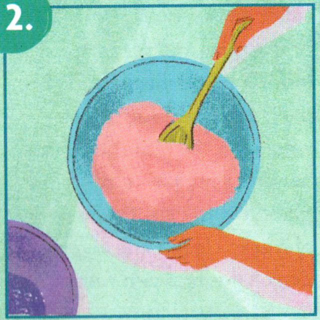
- ☐ 1 cup butter, softened
- ☐ 1 cup sugar
- ☐ 1 egg
- ☐ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ☐ 3 cups flour
- ☐ 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ☐ red food coloring
- ☐ 1 can vanilla frosting

1.



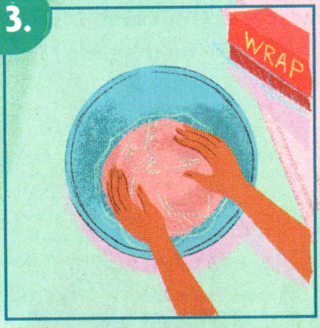
In a mixing bowl, beat together the butter and sugar. Stir in the egg and vanilla extract. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour and baking soda.

2.



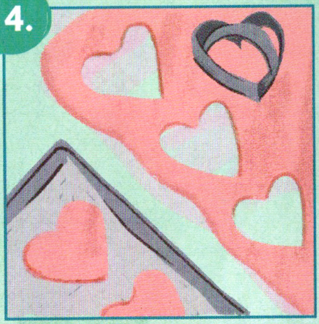
Add a few drops of food coloring to the butter mixture. Then add the flour mixture, a little bit at a time. Keep mixing until the dough sticks together.

3.



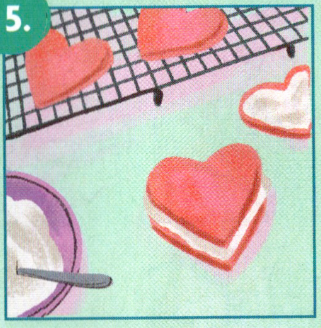
Use clean hands to shape the cookie dough into a ball. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate it for 30 minutes.

4.

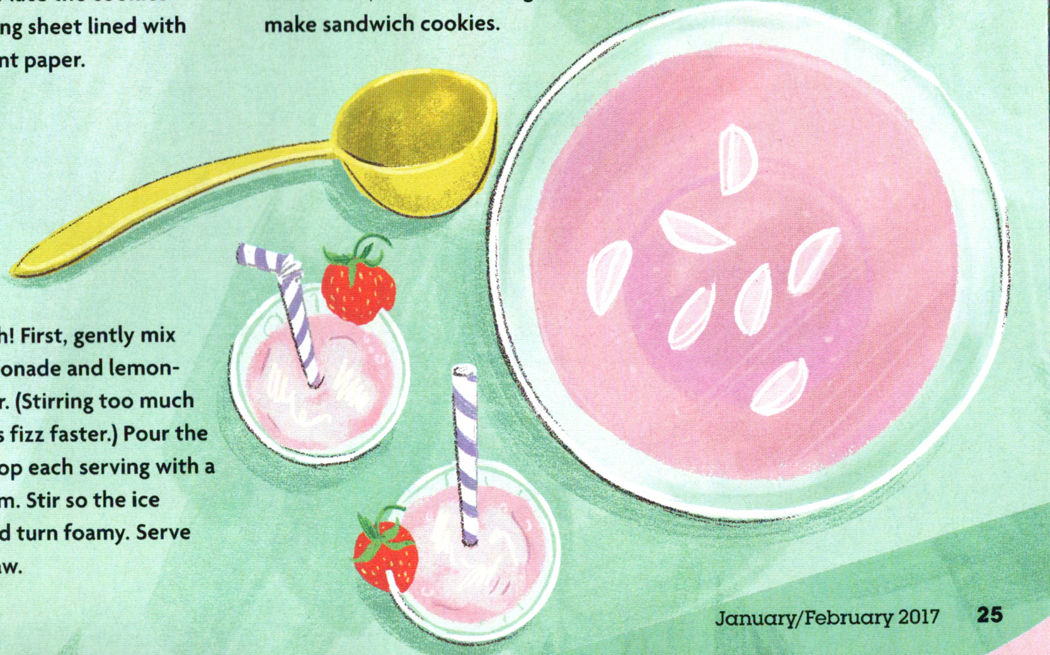


Use a rolling pin to roll out the dough on a floured cutting board. Use a heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut out cookies. Place the cookies on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

5.



Ask an adult to bake the cookies in a preheated 350-degree oven for 5–7 minutes. Let cool completely. Once the cookies are cooled, use the frosting to make sandwich cookies.



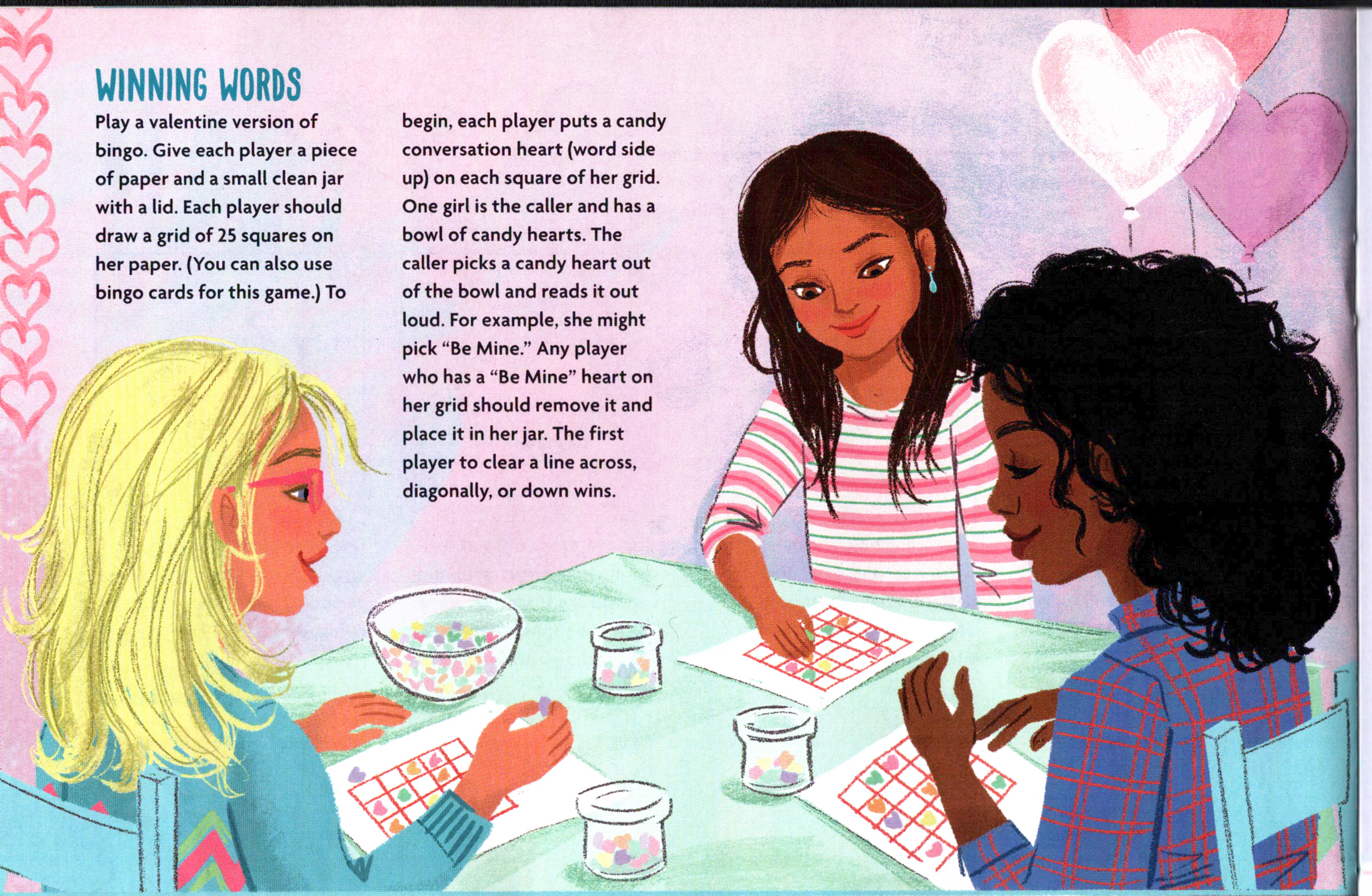
STRAWBERRIES & CREAM PUNCH

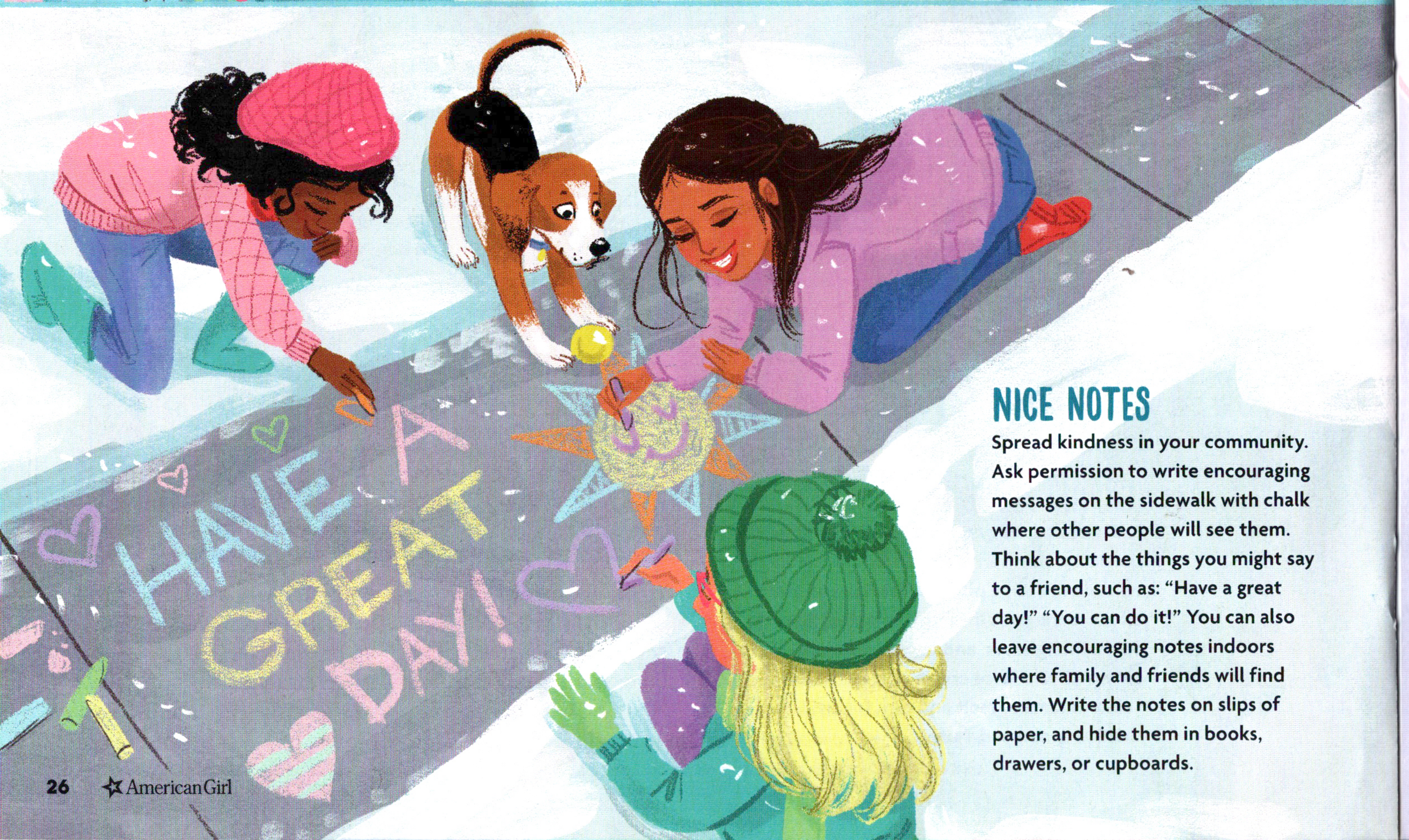
Try a sweet and tangy punch! First, gently mix equal parts strawberry lemonade and lemon-lime soda in a large pitcher. (Stirring too much will make the soda lose its fizz faster.) Pour the punch into glasses, and top each serving with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Stir so the ice cream starts to melt and turn foamy. Serve with a spoon and a straw.

Illustrations: Elisa Chavarri

WINNING WORDS

Play a valentine version of bingo. Give each player a piece of paper and a small clean jar with a lid. Each player should draw a grid of 25 squares on her paper. (You can also use bingo cards for this game.) To begin, each player puts a candy conversation heart (word side up) on each square of her grid. One girl is the caller and has a bowl of candy hearts. The caller picks a candy heart out of the bowl and reads it out loud. For example, she might pick "Be Mine." Any player who has a "Be Mine" heart on her grid should remove it and place it in her jar. The first player to clear a line across, diagonally, or down wins.




HAVE A GREAT DAY!

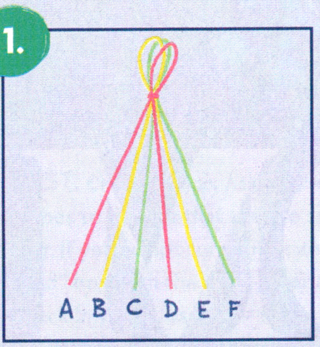
NICE NOTES

Spread kindness in your community. Ask permission to write encouraging messages on the sidewalk with chalk where other people will see them. Think about the things you might say to a friend, such as: "Have a great day!" "You can do it!" You can also leave encouraging notes indoors where family and friends will find them. Write the notes on slips of paper, and hide them in books, drawers, or cupboards.

BUDDY BRACELETS

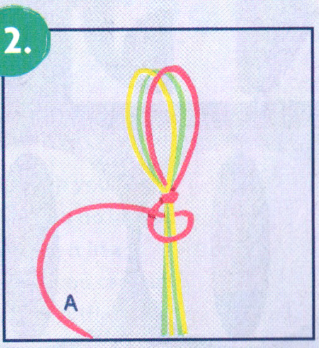
Celebrate friendship with these striped bracelets.

1.



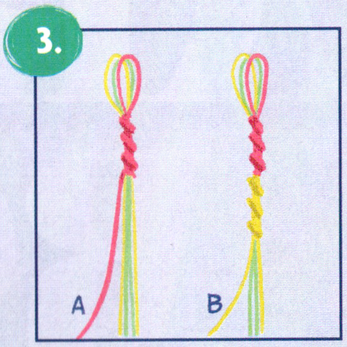
Cut 3 pieces of embroidery floss (each a different color) that are 36 inches long. Gather the pieces together and fold in half. Make a small loop by tying a knot about ½ inch from the folded end. Attach the loop to a clipboard and arrange the strands as shown.

2.



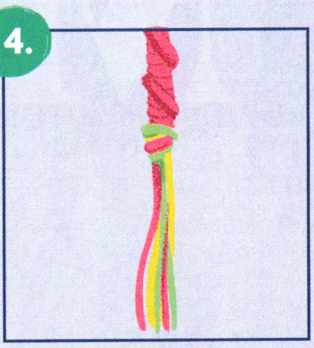
Starting with A, make one knot around B, C, D, E, and F. Using A, keep tying knots around the other strands until the band of color is about ½ inch long. Slide the knots together as you go.

3.



After ½ inch, choose a strand in a different color. Repeat step 2 using the new color. Keep knotting, switching to a new color about every ½ inch.

4.



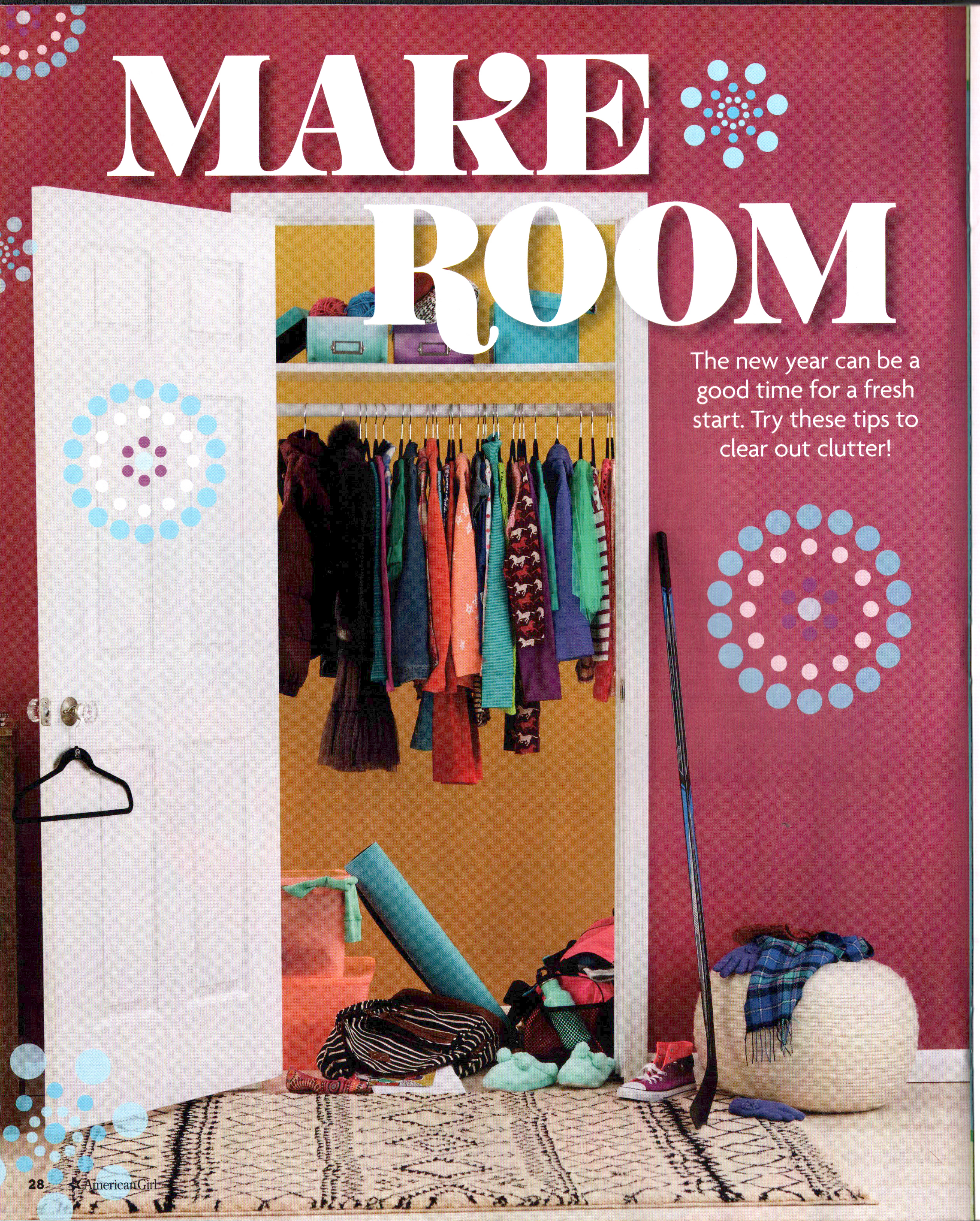
When the bracelet is long enough to fit around your wrist, finish the bracelet by tying all the strands together in a double knot. Trim excess floss. To wear, pull the double knot through the loop.

VALENTINE FAVORS

Send guests home with a jar of hearts. Decorate the lids of the candy jars from the Winning Words game. Place a festive cupcake liner upside down on top of each jar. Hold the liner in place by tying a ribbon around it. ★

MAKE ROOM

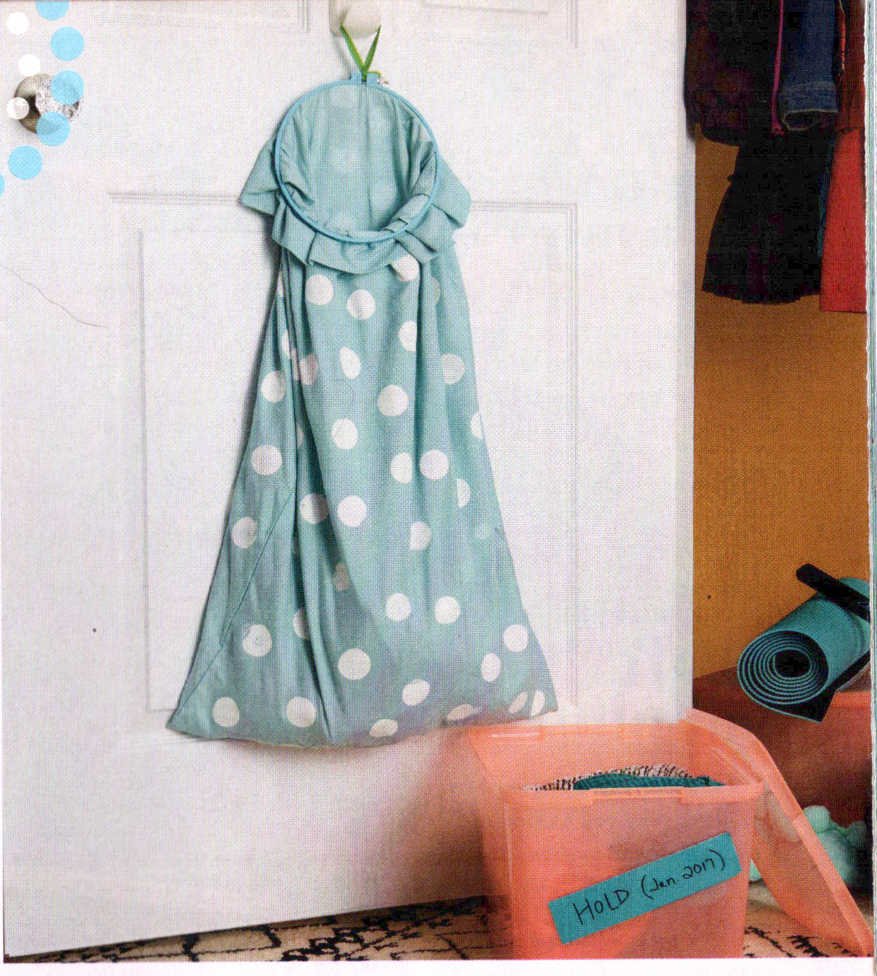
The new year can be a good time for a fresh start. Try these tips to clear out clutter!

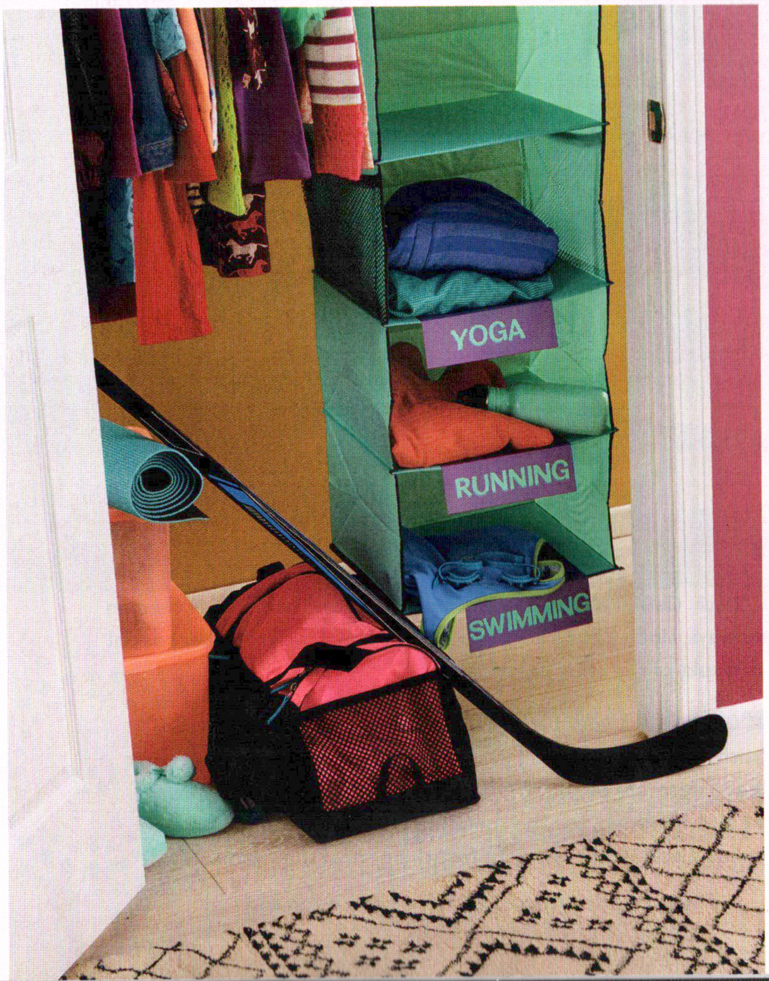


Clothes

FIRST: Create space. Ask a parent to help you find clothes to donate that are too small or you no longer wear. If you're not sure about an item, put it in a "hold" box with the date. After a month, you can put it back in your closet or—if you didn't miss it!—donate it to a charity.

THEN: Corral your clothing. Cover a work surface, and use fabric paint and a round foam brush to decorate a pillowcase (be sure to check with a parent first). Once the paint is dry, sandwich the open end of the pillowcase between the inner and outer rings of a large embroidery hoop. Tighten the screw on the hoop. Then tie a ribbon from the hoop's screw, and hang it on a hook. Use the pillowcase as a clothes hamper or a place to stash winter accessories such as scarves and hats.



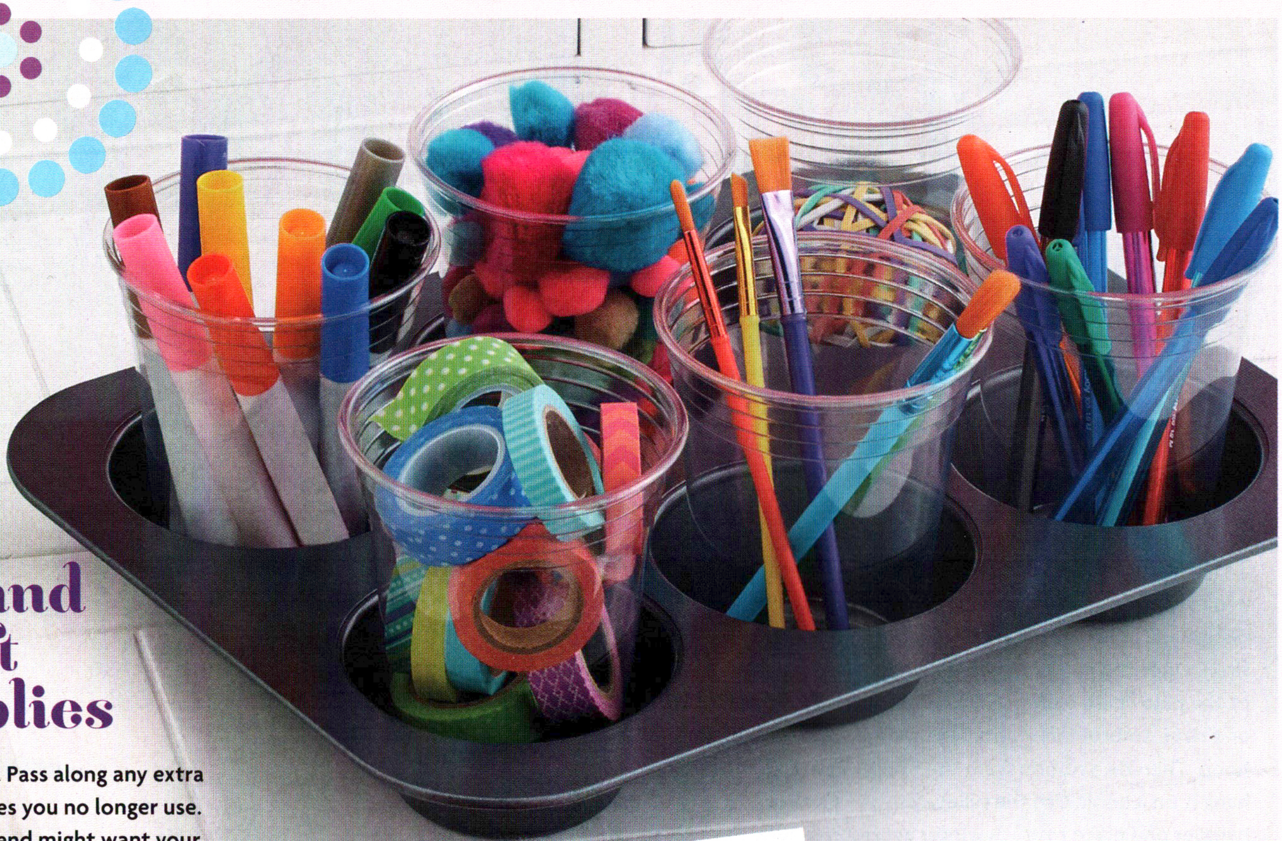


Photos: Chris Hynes Photography Styling: Andrea Debbink

Sports Gear

FIRST: Clear out. Ask a parent for a better place to store some of your sports equipment. Some larger items such as hockey sticks and soccer balls are best kept in a garage or mudroom.

THEN: Categorize. Keep sports gear in a special spot, and it'll be easy to find. Hang a sweater organizer in your closet. Assign each sport to a compartment, and make a label for it. To create a label, fold a 6-by-6-inch piece of card stock in half. Below the fold, write the name of your sport. (You can also use letter stickers.) Staple the label to the bottom of the compartment.



Art and Craft Supplies

FIRST: Share. Pass along any extra supplies or ones you no longer use. A sibling or friend might want your materials even if you don't.

THEN: Gather. Make a desktop organizer to keep your supplies in one place. Ask an adult for a muffin pan or find one at a thrift store. Place plastic cups in each compartment to hold craft supplies such as markers, pom-poms, and washi tape.

Nail Polish

FIRST: Inspect. Discard any nail polish that has separated or looks thick and goopy. Ask a parent if there's a special way your community disposes of nail polish.

THEN: Display. Use a pretty plate or a cake stand to store and display your bottles of polish. Make sure to keep the display out of reach of pets and younger siblings.

Books

FIRST: Stack. Gather all your books into one place. Then display them in different ways. Line up book series on a bookshelf. Stack together special books or books of the same color.

THEN: Contain. Ask your parents if they have an extra storage container (such as a basket or a bin) you can use in your room. Use nontoxic craft glue to decorate the outside of the container with pom-poms. Once the glue has dried, use the container to store all your library books in one place. It'll be easier to find them when they're due.

Let your light shine

School Papers

FIRST: Reduce and recycle. Sort your school papers, and put the ones you no longer want or need in the recycling bin.

THEN: Show your work. Did you find anything in your paper pile that makes you proud? A pet portrait from art club? A test you aced in math class? Attach binder clips to a bulletin board using thumbtacks. Then use the binder clips to display your work!

Jewelry

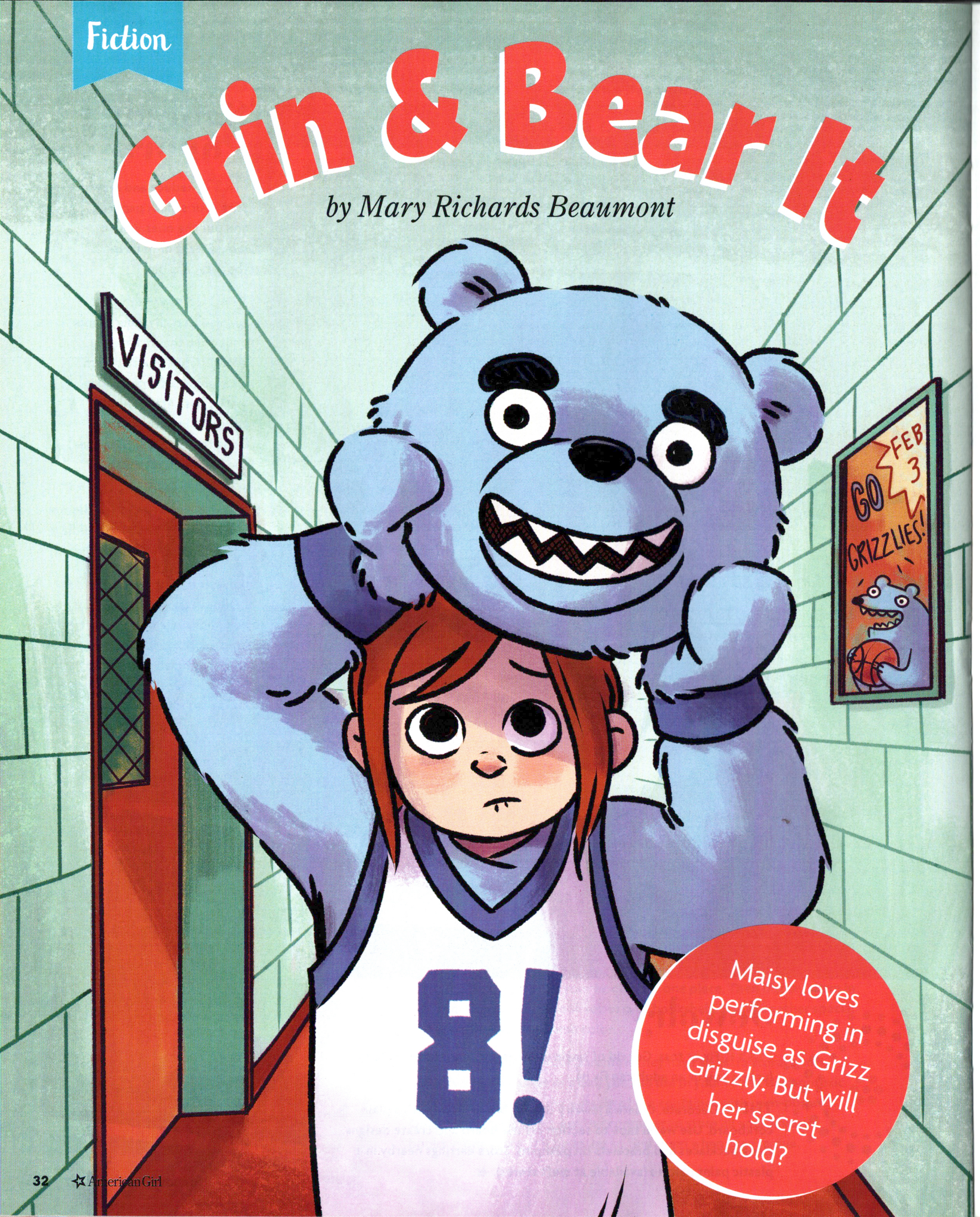
FIRST: Fix or toss. Get rid of single earrings and any broken jewelry (unless you or an adult can fix it).

THEN: Decorate. Create a jewelry display board. Start with a plain corkboard. Use washi tape to section off the board and create designs. Hang necklaces and bracelets on pushpins. Store earrings nearby in a plastic paint palette (available at craft stores). ★

Fiction

Grin & Bear It

by *Mary Richards Beaumont*


VISITORS
GO GRIZZLIES!
FEB 3
8!

Maisy loves performing in disguise as Grizz Grizzly. But will her secret hold?

This is the story of how I, Maisy Albright, the girl LEAST likely to do anything even remotely crazy or daring, ended up dancing in a bear suit on TV. And it's the story of how my secret life as a mascot came to an abrupt, unwelcome end.

Last September, I was feeling weird. It was my first month of middle school, which was completely overwhelming. Every day in the hallways, I felt short and lost and not very smart. I was a silly minnow among sleek tropical fish that never got lost on the way to the art room and always remembered their locker combinations. Everyone at school seemed to know who they were and what they were doing, but not me. I was desperate to find my place at school.

"Rule the School with Student Council!" the sign proclaimed. But when I went to the informational meeting after school, I learned that I'd have to make campaign posters and participate in a pre-election debate. As in getting up onstage in the Horace T. Farnsworth Middle School Auditorium with a bunch of other kids and saying what I thought. Out loud. Yeah, NOT going to happen.

Then there was "Hug the Earth with Green Team!" I loved the idea of an environmental club, and I helped the group put together cardboard recycling bins for the library. But then the meeting time got changed to Mondays, which is when I have piano lessons with Mrs. Barry, who doesn't like changes. So I was done with Green Team.

And then there was the school play. It's not like I was going to audition or anything—yikes, what if I got cast?—so I added my name to the sign-up sheet for props and costumes. That's the real beginning of this story, I guess. It was the day I thought, *Hmm, costumes might be kind of fun.*

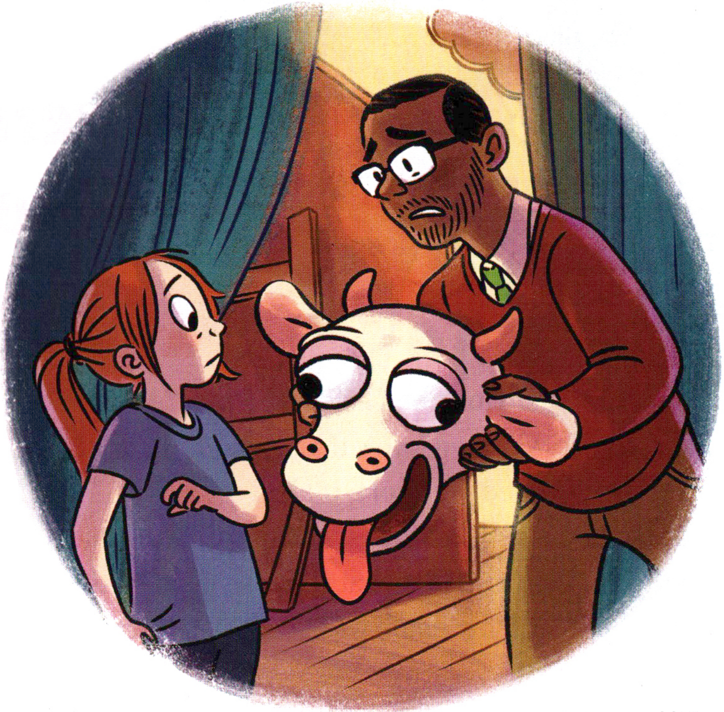
Illustrations: Vera Brosgal

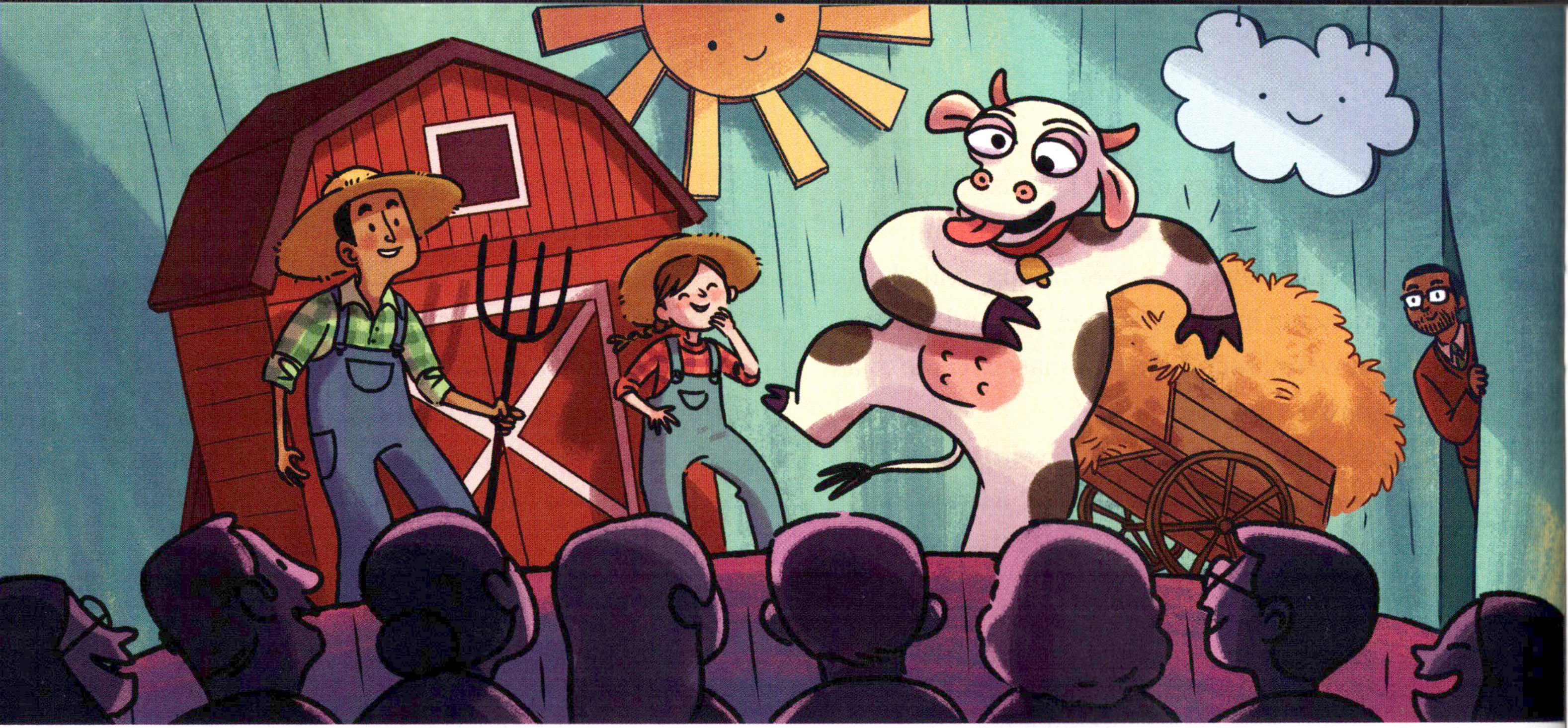
I'd had a blast backstage making sure all the actors had their shoes and figuring out how to make a fake pocket watch out of a bicycle chain for the Train Conductor. But then, on opening night, Mr. Bash rushed up to me. He was the director, and he was frantic.

"There you are, Maisy," he panted. "I'm gonna need to ask you to step in for Bailey tonight. He broke his leg during lunch recess today."

I started sweating and thought five things all at once.

1. Bailey is super hilarious in the role of Lost Cow. He can make the tail of his costume swish in a way that always gets a laugh.
2. He broke his leg? How did I not hear about that?
3. Oh, because I was in the resource center at lunch working on my science project.
4. Of course Bailey broke his leg. He's always jumping off the top of the bike rack and stuff like that.
5. You're gonna ask me to DO WHAT?





"I . . . " I stammered, shaking my head. "I . . ."

"Listen, I know this is short notice," Mr. Bash said. "But we can't do the show without Lost Cow. You know the cues because you're always waiting to take the halter rope from Bailey and give him the straw hat."

"But . . ."

"You don't even need to ham it up the way he does. Just go onstage, get the rope from Train Conductor, do the shrug, and walk off."

"Mr. Bash, I can't . . ."

"Nervous? Don't be," said Mr. Bash. "After all, no one will even know that it's you."

That stopped me short. If I had to go out there and recite a bunch of lines, I think I might faint. Or else throw up. But what if I were wearing the cow head, and my name wasn't in the program, and no one could really even see me?

Mr. Bash didn't give me a chance to say no. "Here," he said, plonking the cow head into my arms. "We need you stage left in fifteen."

I looked down at the Lost Cow head, which grinned confusedly back at me. I had loved watching Bailey romp around onstage, and our dress-rehearsal audience had laughed loudest when he was ambling back and forth, acting lost.

Right then, I decided I'd try. Maybe it would be fun?

Sixty-seven minutes later, when a bunch of people laughed and yelled "Wooo!" as Lost Cow stepped forward during the curtain call, I was pretty sure that I had finally found my place at school. Being Lost Cow was the most fun I'd had in a long time. I had done a ridiculous shrug at

But what if I were wearing the cow head, and my name wasn't in the program, and no one could really even see me?

Train Conductor. I made the two Farmhand actors giggle when I bumped (on purpose) into the hay-wagon set. And I'd playfully whirled my tail as I exited the stage, whipping Train Conductor in the leg. I wanted another chance to play Lost Cow! The problem was, when would my school need an anonymous person to run around in a costume and do strange stuff to make people laugh?

The answer arrived a few days later.

Mr. Bash, who also teaches social studies, called me over in the hallway as I was on my way to math.

"Awesome job as Lost Cow, Maisy," he said, grinning.

I looked around, terrified that someone might hear. "Um, I don't want anyone to know that was me, Mr. Bash."

"Didn't you enjoy yourself? You sure seemed to be having a good time up there."

"I did!" I said, checking behind me to make sure no one overheard. "It was just easy because I didn't have to be *me.* Nobody knew it was me. It was just a character in a costume, you know?"

"Well, that works out," Mr. Bash said. "Coach Fischer asked me about the actor who made everyone laugh at the play on Friday. He wants to bring back Grizz for basketball season this year."

Wow. Grizz Grizzly was legendary. I remembered seeing the bear mascot dancing during halftime and goofing with people in the crowd during games when I was younger. He wore a bright blue jersey and basketball shorts, and his big blue bear eyes were wild and googly. My little brother was scared of Grizz, but I thought Grizz was hilarious. And the idea of being him was kind of exciting.

"I'll do it," I said.

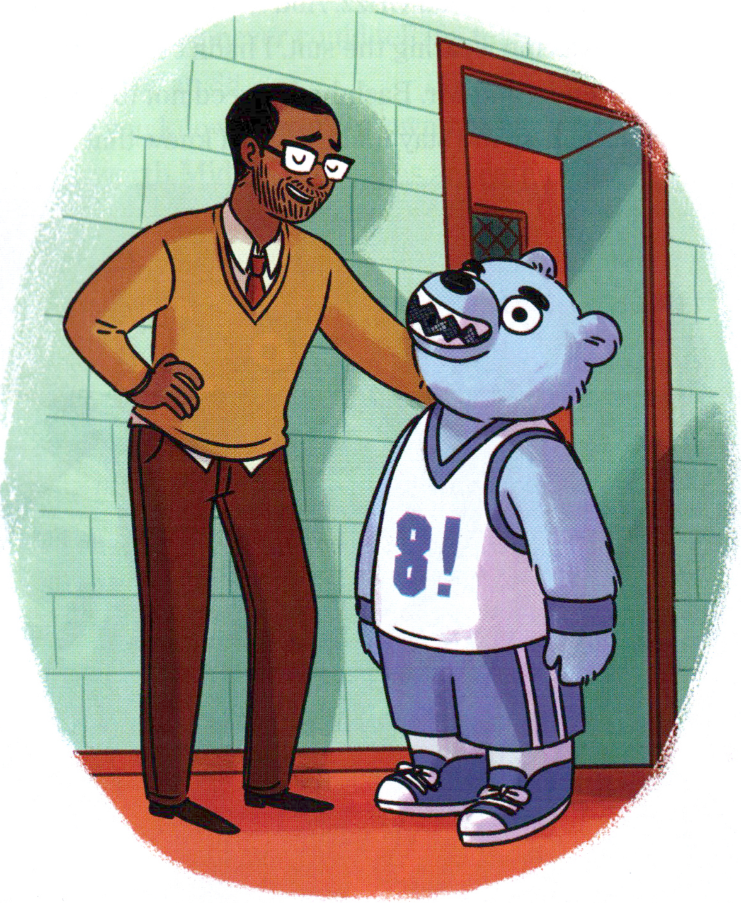
So three weeks later, I was waiting in the hallway outside the visitors' locker room, shifting back and forth on my big blue bear paws. My mind was racing with ideas for what I'd do when I ran into the gym for the first time as Grizz.

"Ready, Grizz?" said a voice beside me. It was Mr. Bash. I had to turn my whole body to see him through the eye screens.

"No one knows it's me, right?" I asked. I'm sure my voice was muffled coming out of the bear head.

"No one," Mr. Bash said.

I took a deep breath and peeked my bear head into the gym. Everyone was watching the team huddle up before the game, so I slipped over to the side of the stands and then stepped tentatively into the aisle between the stands and the bench.



"It's Grizz!" a little kid shouted.

I lifted my arms high above my head and did the double-paw wave that everyone does at our school. Some people cheered. And that was all I needed.

Eight games later, I had mastered my Grizz routine. I would pretend to towel-dry the hair of players who came out of the game to the bench. I had a special tiptoe dance I did whenever the referees would get together to discuss a call. And I'd get the crowd to chant "One . . . two . . . three . . . FOOOOUR!" at the start of the fourth period.

Everybody loved Grizz. And no one had figured out it was me wearing the suit. I hadn't told any of my friends, and Mr. Bash had agreed not to tell in order to help me stay undercover. I knew that I could only be Grizz in secret. I was too shy to deal with people asking me about it. And like Mr. Bash had said before the play, I didn't need to be nervous since no one knew it was me.

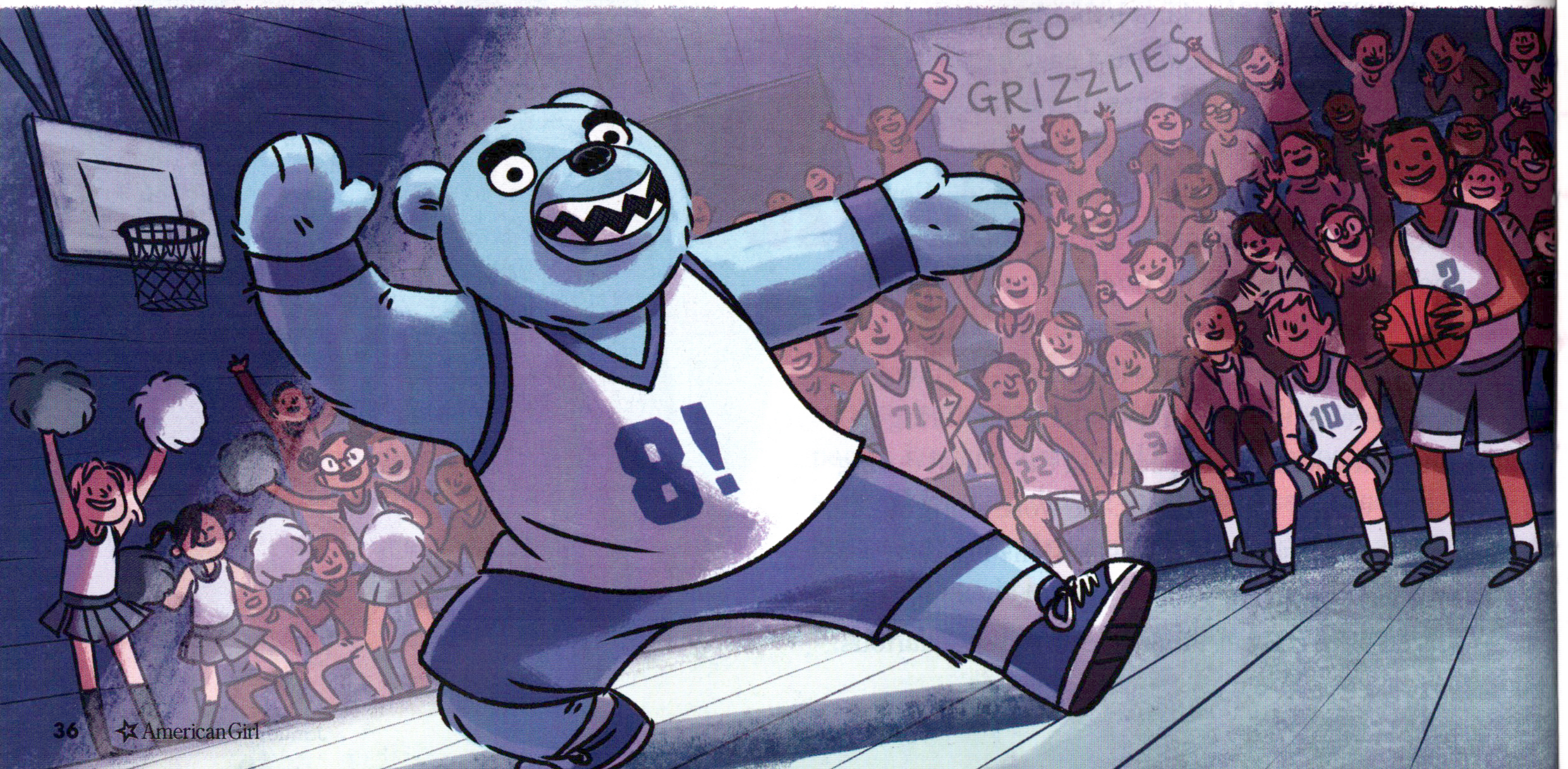
I knew that I could only be Grizz in secret. I was too shy to deal with people asking me about it.

Toward the end of the season, Mr. Bash called me in to talk about "an opportunity," he'd said.

"You know that Tristan Haley's dad owns Sleepy Comfort Land, the mattress store? Well, he wants Grizz for a commercial," Mr. Bash said.

"A commercial on TV?" I said, amazed. "Are you kidding me?"

"Nope, for real," Mr. Bash said. "It sounds pretty funny—he wants to do a thing where you wear a gold wig, but you're a bear, and all the mattresses are *juuust* right. Get it?"

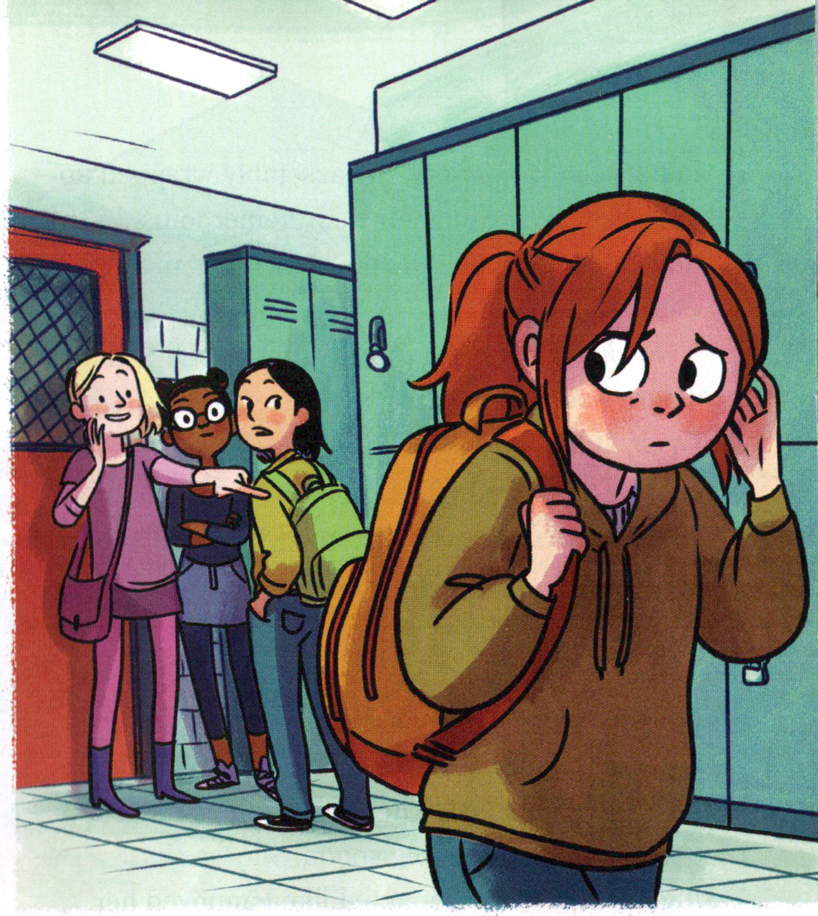


I laughed. "That's awesome! When?"

So I spent part of a Saturday afternoon doing happy dances and snuggling up in the beds at Sleepy Comfort Land, wrapping myself in giant blankets and heaving some exaggerated snores. It was a blast, and Tristan's dad had a big booming laugh that only encouraged Grizz.

The commercial aired, and still no one knew my secret. Tristan's dad didn't remember my name and told Tristan that Grizz was "just some kid from your school." I heard someone in my homeroom wondering out loud about who played Grizz, and people talked about how great it was that Grizz was on TV. But I figured that since there were only a few more basketball games in the season, my secret would be safe, right?

Wrong.



It was an excellent day for a school assembly. We went to the auditorium right after lunch, which meant afternoon classes would be short. People were buzzing about a special presentation that was scheduled after the sidewalks-and-crosswalks report by the Safety Patrol. Seeing them onstage getting ready to start their lecture in front of the whole school, I was glad I hadn't joined *that* group.

After they'd finished, our principal took the stage, clapping.

"Students, we have a special guest today," she began. "Mr. Barry Haley, the owner of Sleepy Comfort Land, has generously donated a new scoreboard to our gym!"

Everyone clapped like crazy. A couple of the lights on our scoreboard had been burned out for forever, so you never could tell if a team's score was a 30 or an 88.

"As you know, one of our own here at Farnsworth Middle School has appeared in a commercial for Mr. Haley's store, and he wanted to show his appreciation for our very own Grizz, Maisy Albright!"

Oh no. I felt like the breath had evaporated in my chest. People were turning in their seats, searching to see who I was. "It's you?" exclaimed Janie Fox, a girl from my elementary school who was sitting next to me. "You're Grizz?" She had a strange look on her face, surprised but with a puzzled little frown. Like she was thinking, *Huh, that's weird. I thought Grizz would be somebody . . .* What? Popular? Cool? Not in sixth grade? I didn't know, and I didn't want to.

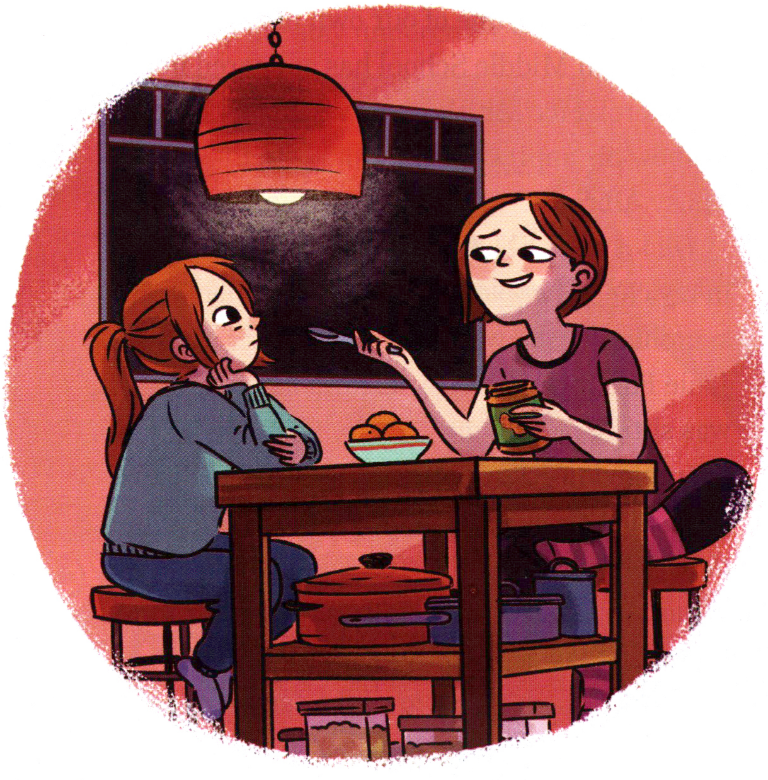
I worked on making myself as small as possible in my seat. Eventually, the assembly wrapped up and everyone headed for their homerooms. In the halls, I caught some people glancing at me. A few even stared.

So this is the end of it, I thought. Just like that. There was no way that I could ever go back out as Grizz. It had been easy to relax and have fun and act like a goofball when I was Grizz and not me. Now that people knew, the magic had vanished.

"Don't you have a game tonight?" My big sister, Ashlyn, was perched on a stool in our kitchen, eating peanut butter off a big spoon. She was in high school but never acted like I annoyed her too much.

"No," I sighed, slumping onto the stool next to her. "I'm done with that."

"The season's over?"



"Actually, everyone found out that I'm Grizz." I scrinched up my face. "So I quit."

She gave me her best raised-eyebrows look. "That's craze, Mais."

"It's not."

"I know you're shy about it and all, but people should know it's you," she said. "You're so brave—I never could have done that when I was your age. And it's cool that you spend your time making people smile. That's an important job."

"I wasn't doing it for other people," I said. "And it's not *me* making people smile—the bear suit makes everything funny. I just did it because it was fun."

"Yeah, but why do you think it was fun?" she asked. "What if the crowd just sat there, staring, while you were eavesdropping on the refs or doing your Grizz Goes Golfing act?"

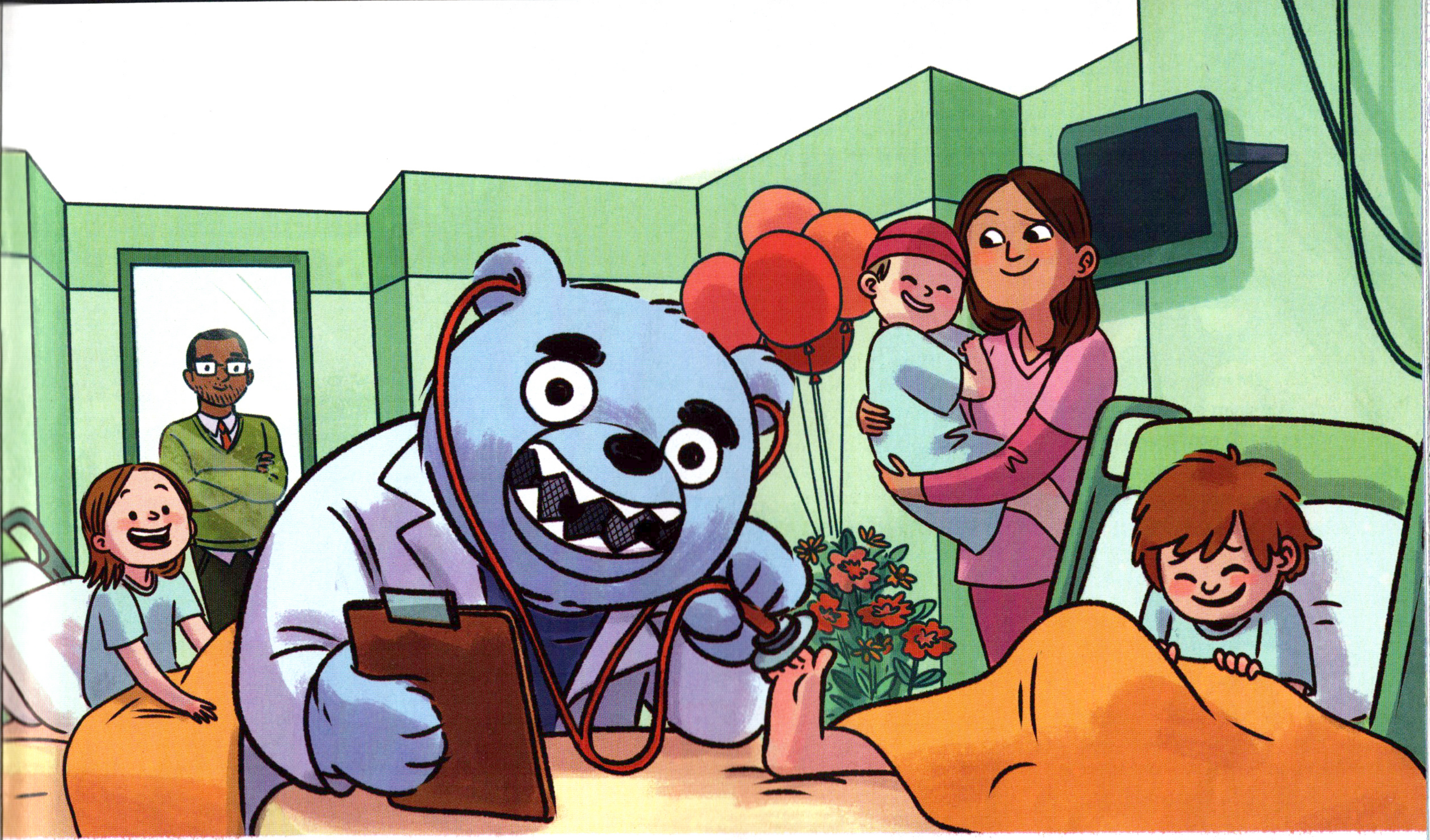
She had a point, sort of. Grizz was always better when the audience was into it. Still, that night's game was Grizz-free. I was curled up on the couch, pretending that I wasn't feeling as blue as a Farnsworth Grizzlies basketball jersey.

A few weeks later, Mr. Bash waved to me as I headed for math. I followed him into his classroom.

"About Grizz," he said. "Sorry about all that. I understand why you quit."

I braced myself for a big game-day pep talk. You know, about how much the team needed me and how I had to get back out there and show everyone that I could . . . whatever.

"Children's Central has asked for Grizz to visit during its Fun Fest this weekend," Mr. Bash said.



I hadn't been expecting that. "The children's hospital?"

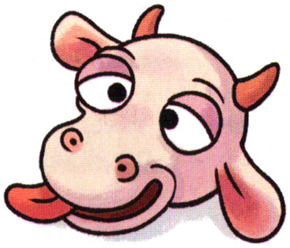
"Yes," he said. "The staff there think that Grizz could cheer up the kids, and I thought that you might be willing to come out of retirement to help out. It's your choice, of course."

I stared at Mr. Bash for a second before letting out the tiniest smile. It felt different now, saying yes to putting myself out there. It wasn't so scary after all.

"I guess I can bear it," I said, shaking my head at my own dumb joke. Of course I would do it. And I'm sure Mr. Bash knew that, too.

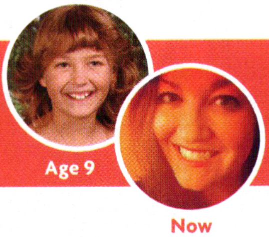
That weekend, Grizz—I mean, *I*—studied a patient's tiny foot and made elaborate "notes" on a clipboard, while tons of other little patients giggled around me. I grinned inside the bear head and caught Mr. Bash looking. He couldn't see my face, but it seemed as if he wanted to meet my eye and give me a you-get-it-now? nod.

Turns out, I'd just needed some time to figure out what was true. I'd been being *me* all along. ★



Meet the Author

Mary Richards Beaumont



Age 9

Now

As a kid, there were two things I really wanted to do: be a sports mascot and a writer. I grew up to be a writer who wrote a story about a mascot—pretty close, right?

This or That?

Would you rather . . .

spot clouds that look like hearts **OR** clouds that look like hot-air balloons?

ride a horse with a pink mane **OR** have a puppy with a heart-shaped mark on her fur?

wear unicorn earrings **OR** giant heart sunglasses?

buy a bouquet of lollipops **OR** cake pops?

sit on a beanbag chair that looks like a doughnut **OR** sleep on a bed that looks like a cupcake?

play in a pink snowstorm **OR** skate on rainbow ice?

open a gift bag that looks like a ladybug **OR** a strawberry?

wear slippers that look like marshmallows **OR** mittens that look like kittens?

have wallpaper that looks like sprinkles **OR** frosting?

make an ice sculpture that looks like a train **OR** a teapot?

eat an Eiffel Tower cake **OR** a leaning tower of pizza?

see balloon letters that spell out "girl power" **OR** "friends forever"?

Illustrations: Vivienne To

B

Art and Craft Supplies

Nail Polish

Books

D

IN YOUR MAGAZINE: Adorable Animal Posters ✿ 3 Quizzes

DIY room crafts!

American Girl

January/February 2017

Lovable SNOW PEOPLE

I ♥ my Friends

Throw a pal-entine's party!

Inspiring real-girl stories

THIS FROSTING WAS TOTALLY DELICIOUS!

Coming up in the next issue of American Girl magazine!

Cookie Lab Experiment with different ways to make cookies!

Egg-cellent Create fun fake eggs for spring!

Beautiful Butterflies Readers created bright butterflies.

So Sweet You'll love this baby animal quiz.

A

MAKE ROOM

The new year can be a good time for a fresh start. Try these tips to clear out clutter!

CUTIE-PIE COOKIES

STRAWBERRIES & CREAM PUNCH

C

YOU GOT THIS!

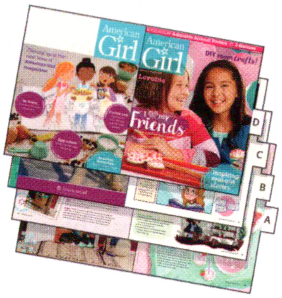
American Girl

Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl* for your doll or stuffed animal. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1. Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.

2. Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.

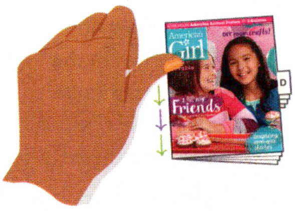


Continued ☛

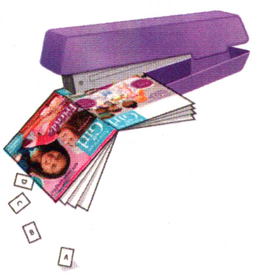
Illustrations: Monika Roe

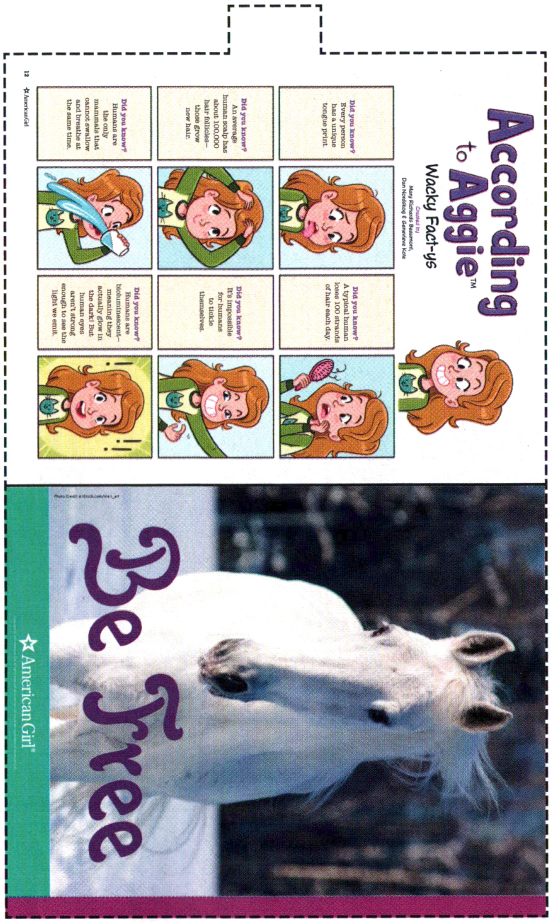
Mini Mag

3. Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.



4. Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!




According to Aggie™
Wacky Fact-ys
Be Free

HAPPY HEARTS DAY
Spread the love and friendship at a Pet-entine's Day party!
Clothes
Sports Gear

Quiz
Happy to Help
How can you make a difference?
Jewelry

School Papers

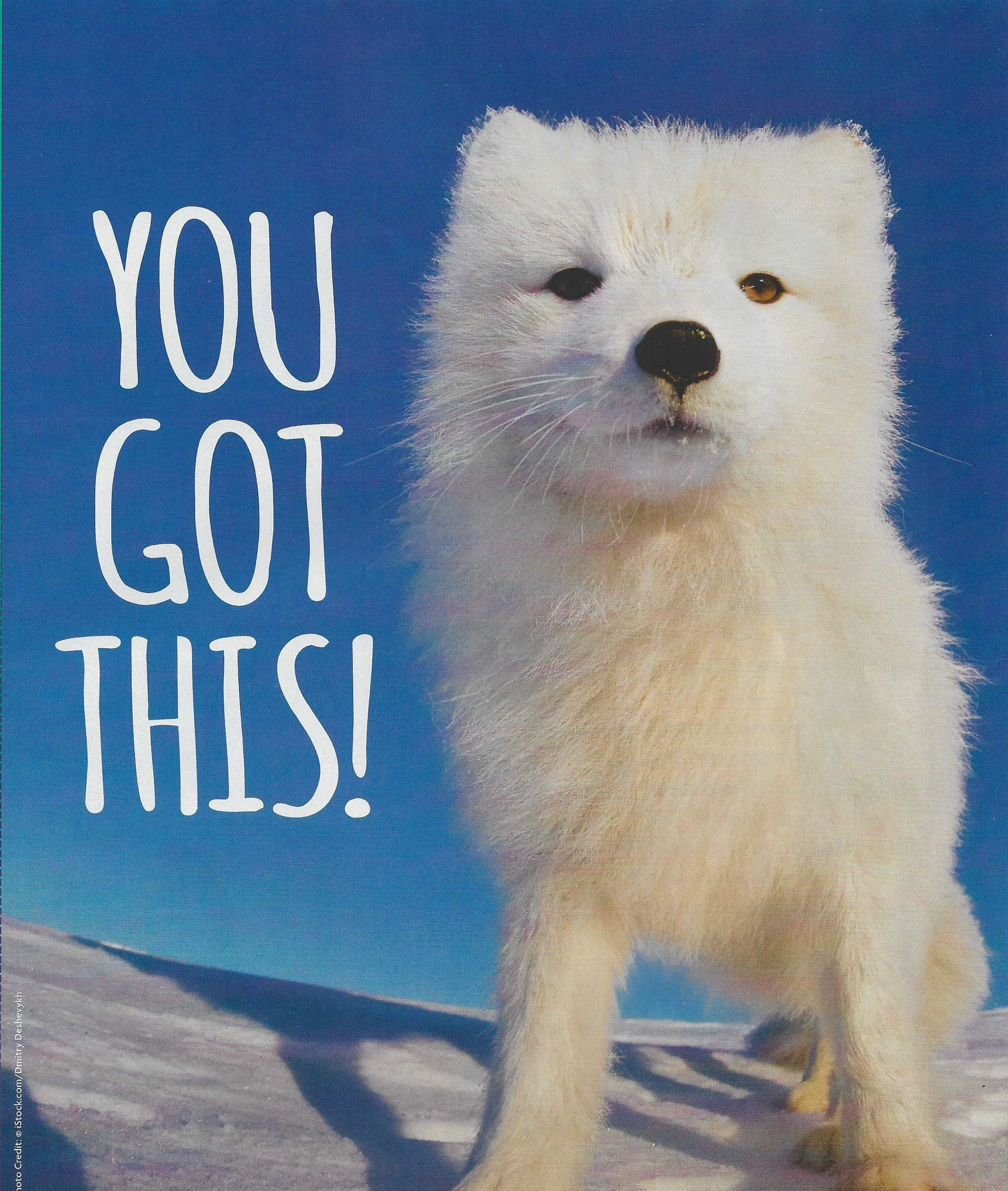


Photo Credit: © iStock.com/Dmitry Deshevykh

Posters Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters. ★

American Girl®

Copyright © 2017 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

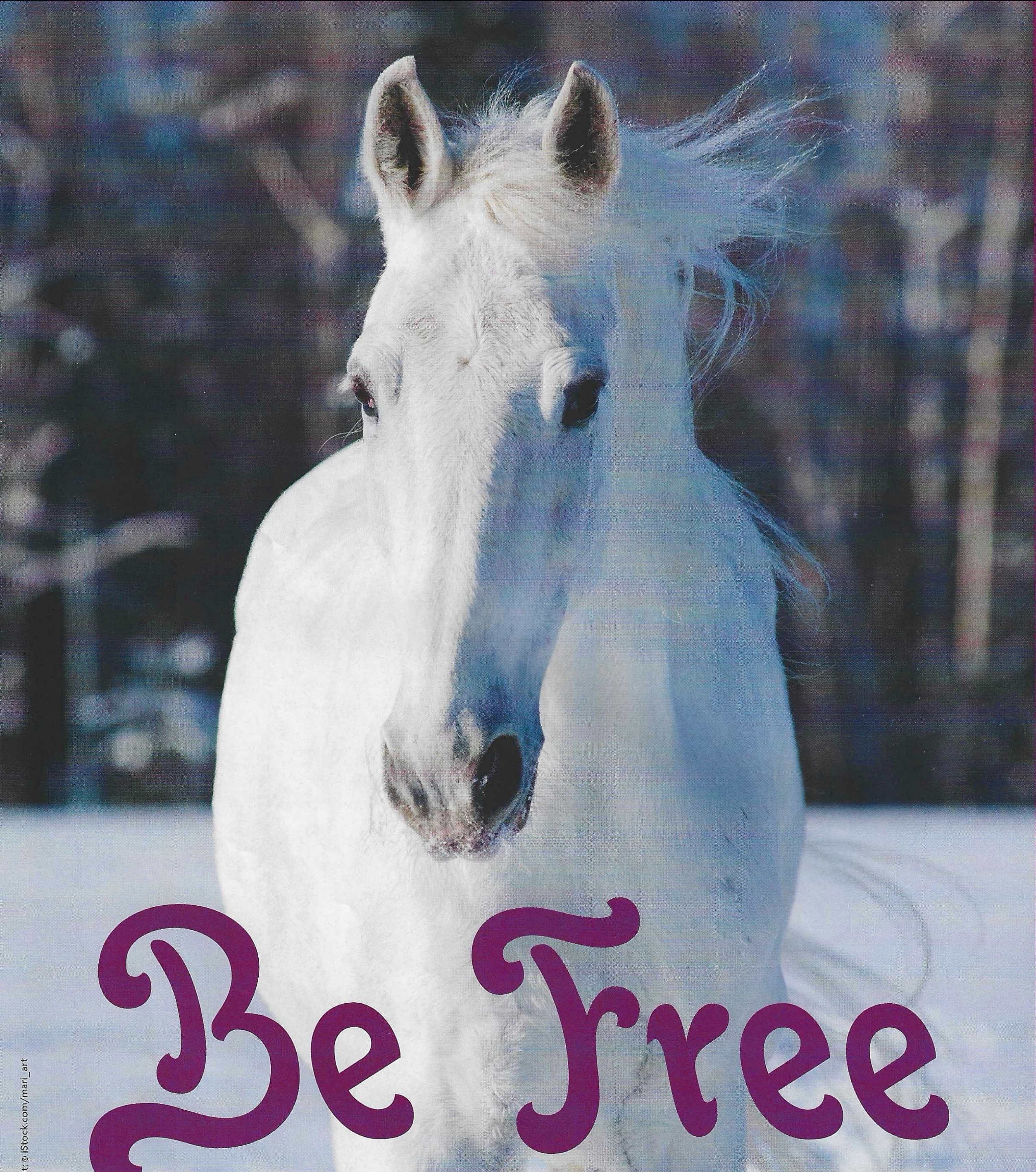
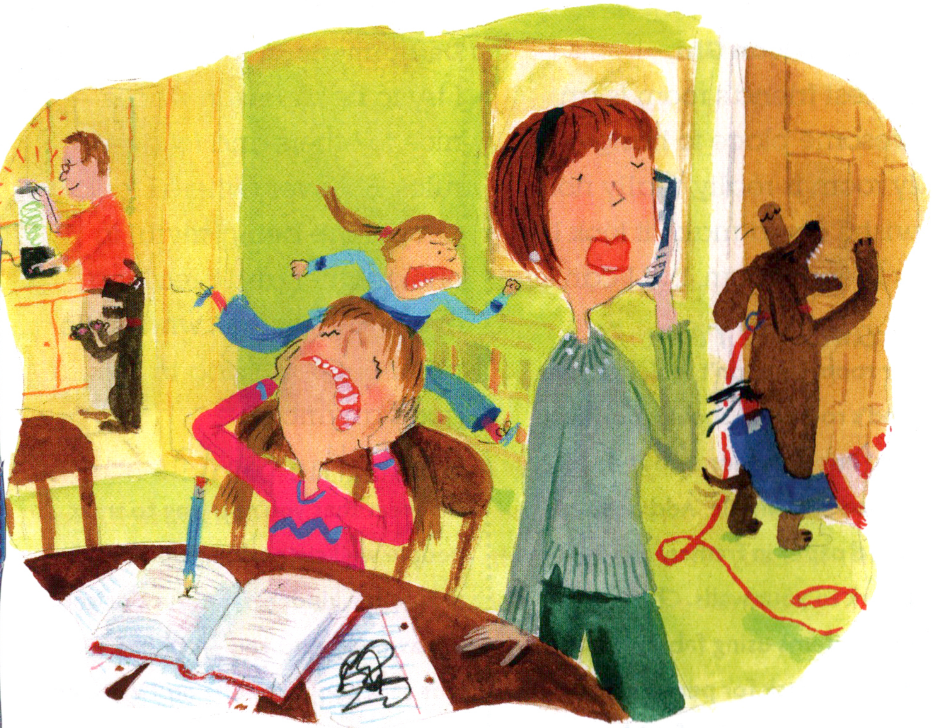


Photo Credit: © iStock.com/mari_art

American Girl®

Copyright © 2017 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

I need quiet, but my family is LOUD.



Dear American Girl,

I have two parents, two siblings, and two dogs. I like my family, but sometimes they are SO LOUD. How can I get some peace and quiet?

quiet sister

There are plenty of people who get their energy from time spent alone, exploring their thoughts. (That's what being an "introvert" means.) Having space away from noise, activity, and other people helps with this. Tell your parents how you're feeling. Let them know that to be your best, you need quiet time to recharge every day. Ask for their ideas about how you can get some peace while still staying connected to everyone. After all, it's just as important to make time for family as it is to spend time by yourself.

Dear American Girl,

This year, I got put into the advanced class at school. The problem is, I worked so hard last semester but didn't get a great grade. It's just too much for me. I'm scared.

Scared

Advanced classes are supposed to be hard. School might have been too easy for you before, and that's why you were moved into this class. It's a change, for sure, but school shouldn't make you feel scared. It's time to talk to a parent and make a plan together to tackle this problem. It could be that you need more time with your teacher or with a tutor. Or you might need some new ideas for dealing with your homework. It could also be that you would have more success in a different class. Whatever happens, it's important to keep trying your hardest and doing your very best work while you figure this out. Hang in there!

Posters Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters.

Dear American Girl,

I have two friend groups who refuse to play with each other. I'm stuck in the middle. How can I spend time with each group without hurting the other group's feelings—or even worse, making them mad at me?

Stuck between friends

You are absolutely right to avoid as much of this friend drama as you can. Being stuck in the middle is awful, especially because it's pretty likely that someone will try to drag you into the conflict sooner or later. If that does happen, practice saying this: "I'm friends with all of you." Repeat it as often as needed as you make time for each group. If anyone gives you a hard time, keep your response simple. "I know how you feel about them. I like hanging out with everybody." Make it two separate sentences, leaving out the "but." (See how "I know how you feel, but . . ." makes it sound as if they're not really allowed to feel the way they do?) They can feel their way. You can feel your way. Good friends won't make you choose sides.

Dear American Girl,

My best friend's room is an awesome place to hang out. My room is really, really not. I wish I could make it look like my friend's room, but I can't.

not-awesome room

Your room shouldn't look like your friend's room—it should look like yours! Bringing your own style to your space is simple. Add posters, printed paper in frames, or your own artwork to your walls. Change the color of items using fabric, paint, or paper tape (ask for permission first). Watch your magazine for ideas, too—even decorations designed for parties can look cool in a bedroom.

Dear American Girl,

I try to be a person who is nice to others and follows rules. But everywhere I look, people are being awful to one another and breaking every rule. It's like, what's the point of even trying to be good anymore?

What's the point?

It's great that you're trying to treat people well even when you don't always see kindness in return or good behavior around you—either from kids at school or adults on TV. Doing the right thing, even when you don't get credit for it, is awesome. It's called having strong character, and that is a super valuable quality in life. In addition to that, doing the right thing will help you to feel happy with yourself and proud of the way you act. Even more great news? Doing good has a way of coming back to you one way or another. Sometimes it takes a while and you won't see how right away. But keep putting good things out into the world. Because, as the old saying goes, you get what you give.

Advice from You

Dear American Girl,

It seems as if every kid is obsessed with this one game where you're a night watchman in a haunted restaurant. I watched someone play it and got so scared! How can I overcome this fear so I can play with my friends???

afraid

Just ignore this game and ask your friends not to talk about it. (But just to tell you, I heart that game!)

-Bella

I used to be really scared of this game, too. This sounds really weird, but I just kept playing it over and over, and then finally I got used to the scariness.

-Ellie

I think that you don't need to get over your fear. It sounds perfectly logical to me for you to be scared! If you play this game, you could have nightmares or anxiety. If I were you, I would simply play something else while your friends are playing this.

-Phoenix

I've seen that game, and it freaks me out as well. It's not worth having those scary images in your mind just because everyone else is doing it. Stay true to you!

-Elizabeth

You don't have to do anything you don't want to do. But if you want to try this game, try thinking about it as more of a joke than a scary situation. This way, you'll have more fun and be able to laugh about it.

-Brittany

It might seem hard, but it's better to protect yourself from things that frighten you than to go with what the crowd is doing. Do what you want to do.

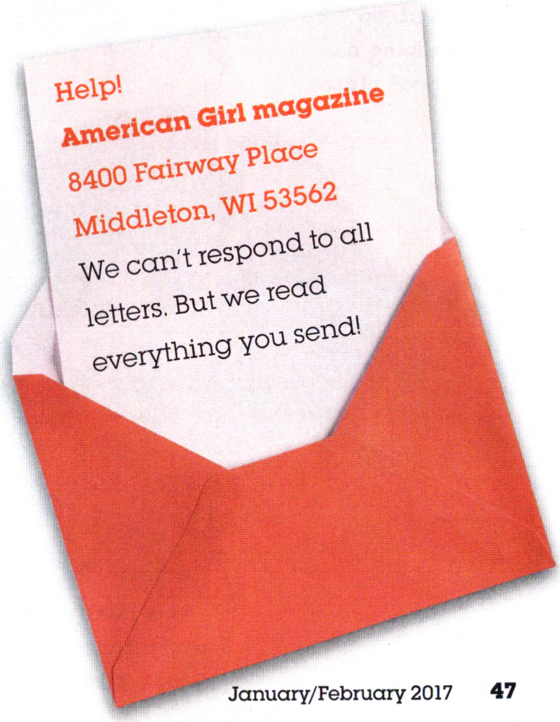
-Lydia

Advice from You

"I want to look good, but I don't really know how to do style. Should I wear the latest trends or what?"

Less than a trendster

Do you have advice to help solve this problem? Or do you need advice for solving your own problem? Send letters to:



Help!
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562
We can't respond to all letters. But we read everything you send!

BEHIND THE Scenes

Take a peek at what happened on the set of our Make Room feature!

Youa made sure that the lighting was just right.

Assembling the furniture took some tools and muscle!

Andrea arranging our «before» closet

And ta-da! It's all assembled...

This cute dinosaur decorated with craft tape didn't make it into a shot, but we love her anyway!

Andrea labeling the bins

ADVERTISEMENT

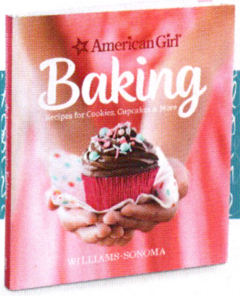
Shown: Gourmet Kitchen Set for Dolls

truly me™

Baking just got sweet

Whether she loves cooking up her favorite recipes with her doll or decorating freshly baked cupcakes, discover a world of delightful books, fun toys, and real tools of the trade!

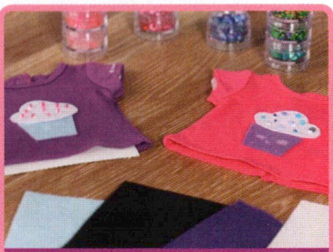
Check out our Williams-Sonoma *Baking* cookbook, filled with fun (and easy!) recipes.



play@ American Girl™

She can create a cute cupcake tee or apron for her doll, and find other fun crafts to make or games to play by visiting: americangirl.com/videos

Kitchen Apron



Cupcake T-Shirt

Bakery Treats

Stop by the American Girl store nearest you, call **800-845-0005,** or go to **americangirl.com** to learn more.

Must be at least 18 years of age to purchase online.

©/™ 2016 American Girl

American Girl™

Coming up in the next issue of ***American Girl*** **magazine!**

So Sweet
You'll love this baby animal quiz.

Cookie Lab
Experiment with different ways to make cookies!

Egg-cellent
Create fun fake eggs for spring!

Beautiful Butterflies
Readers created bright butterflies.

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

HAPPY
~~VAL~~ PAL-ENTINE'S
DAY!
CUTIE PIE
DREAM BIG
PUPPY LOVE
COOL CAT

AG's Happy Hearts Day STICKERS

AWE SOME
I ♡ YOU
YOU ROCK!
XOXO
SWEET
SMILE
BFF
Happy
Day!
BEST DAY

Illustrations: Elisa Chavarri

Copyright © 2017 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.